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# **Social Work Qualifications and Regulation in European Economic Area (EEA)**

**Final report**

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Development**

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of the research, commissioned by the General Social Care Council (GSCC) and Skills for Care and Development, is to provide up-to-date and standardised information on the status of the social work profession and its regulation in the European Economic Area. This aims to assist the GSCC in making decisions about the registration of social workers who have qualified in the EEA and are applying for registration in the UK. The research is conducted in partnership with the GSCC and examined data already held by the International Qualifications team in relation to different EEA states.

This report provides detailed information on social work regulation, registration process, education and training (including practice placements), fitness to practise and other valuable information for a considerable number of EEA countries. The high level of EEA countries' engagement with the research process highlights a mutual understanding of the value of information sharing in relation to the social work profession across Europe. This is expected to grow with the increasingly free movement across Europe and the shortages of social workers in some countries including England.

The overall analysis indicates the variation of social work activities and regulatory systems across Europe. Of particular interest is the fact that taking statutory responsibility for individuals, whether children, families or older people, was not regarded to be part of social workers duties and activities in a considerable number of European countries. However, responses to the free text boxes indicate an awareness of the growing interest in the social work profession and the effect of the Bologna agreement is evident in this process.

There is the opportunity through the EC Internal Market Information System (IMI) for competent authorities to carry out mutual exchange on qualifications and regulatory fitness to practise issues. This option has recently opened up for social work. Some respondents have indicated that they see this as a way of sustaining communication to support cross-border mobility in the future.

Only six of the countries confirmed that fitness to practise standards are in place, either through direct regulation or a related code of professional ethics. There was recognition in the absence of a standard that sharing information on disciplinary actions or criminal sanctions can be difficult across countries, including issues around data protection. Others seem to indicate that while they do not have a standard for fitness to practise, they would expect to share information. The lack of fitness to practise standards for social work in many countries in the EEA poses challenges for the exchange of information. The Directive gives the right for each competent authority to provide information on legal establishment, good conduct and the absence of any disciplinary or criminal sanction of a professional nature. Unless there are strong systems in place in each country, cross-country communication may continue to be difficult for those accessing the permanent register and for temporary social workers where a competent authority may not have access to information on suitability and fitness to practise while endorsing qualification credentials.

We saw some variability in the extent and integration of practice learning, assessed alongside course curriculum or thereafter for the award of the qualification. This is a key requirement for social work in England and further discussions need to take place between competent authorities to learn more about the standard and quality of practice learning.

The output from this research has strengthened the knowledge base on social work qualifications in Europe and will enable the GSCC and in the future the Health Professions Council which takes over the GSCC's regulation of social workers in 2012 to more accurately assess the qualifications received from outside the UK. It will also enable those employers who recruit social workers in the EEA to have a prior knowledge of the qualifications likely to be eligible for registration.

## **ACKNOWLEDGMENTS**

We are grateful to Skills for Care and Development who funded the research.

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## BACKGROUND

### THE LEGAL FRAMEWORK GOVERNING THE MOBILITY OF SOCIAL WORK PROFESSIONALS IN THE EEA

Under the EU Treaty, social workers who are trained and qualified in the European Economic Area (EEA) have the right to practise anywhere in the EEA as long as they are appropriately trained and qualified.<sup>1</sup> In order to ensure that there is a transparent and fair approach to determining which social workers can gain registration and the right to practise in another EEA country the European Union has introduced a Directive setting out the procedures which national governments must adhere to when assessing the qualifications of a trained social worker from another EEA country.

This Directive (Directive 2005/36/EC) on the recognition of professional qualifications came into effect in October 2007 and covers social workers as well as a range of other professionals.<sup>2</sup> The law gives rights to EEA nationals to have their qualification assessed by a competent authority and if this is determined as 'equivalent' to be given the right to practise under the same conditions as a social worker in the UK.

Under the Directive and the subsequent regulations the General Social Care Council (GSCC) has a legal duty, as a competent authority, to assess the equivalency of qualifications (of relevant individuals) to the standards required for England. Where the GSCC considers that the qualification or training or practice of the social worker is equivalent to that of a UK trained social worker it must grant registration. Where the GSCC does not consider the applicant has met the required standards it must set out the shortfall in training or experience of the individual and allow the individual to make up the difference or sit an aptitude test to demonstrate that they have met the relevant standard. There are also duties under the Directive to exchange information with other competent authorities for social work in the EEA on fitness to practise issues.

The GSCC has responsibility for holding a register of Qualified Social Workers and Students in England. In general, social workers in the United Kingdom are subject to professional regulation. Section 61 of the Care Standards Act 2000 protects the title of 'social worker'; making it an offence for an individual to describe oneself as a social worker, with intention to deceive, if not registered with the care councils in England and Wales.<sup>3</sup> Similar provisions exist in Scotland and Northern Ireland.

Around 8% of the register held by the General Social Care Council consists of registrants who were qualified outside the UK. Out of these 27% are from the EEA. The GSCC's own internal analysis show a clear increase in the number of applications from social workers trained in the EEA to register to practise social work in England. This number

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<sup>1</sup> The EEA consists of 30 countries, the 26 members of the European Union as well as Norway, Iceland, Liechtenstein and Switzerland

<sup>2</sup> The European Communities (Recognition of Professional Qualifications) Regulation 2007, Statutory Instrument 2007, No 2781.

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is predicted to increase, particularly with the government's proposed immigration cap on non-EU migrants.

One of the key challenges for the GSCC and the other professional regulators in the United Kingdom is to gain an understanding of the nature of social work in other EEA countries as well as the education, training and regulation of the profession. Without such background information it is difficult to make an assessment of the qualifications and determine whether EEA applicants meet the standards required by the GSCC.

## **SOCIAL WORK REGULATION IN THE EEA**

It is clear from the literature that there is a wide and varied understanding of social work across the EEA. Moreover, the history of social work education varies widely across the EEA. Previous research indicates that in some countries, social work qualifications are well established and embedded within the higher education system; while in others, social work is a relatively 'new' area. For example, social work as a profession was introduced in Bulgaria in the 1990s using the German system of 'social pedagogy' (Freed 1995); since then, social work education has expanded to a number of Bulgarian universities. In Romania, the legal recognition of social work as an independent profession and field of practice became effective in 2005, through the Social Work Law of that year. This Law instated a four-tier regulatory and licensing system: a provisional license (*Debutante*) for recent graduates; the title of *Practisant*, once the social worker had completed one year of practise; *Specialist*, for those with three to five years' experience; and *Principal Social Worker*, for those with five or more years of experience.

Not only does social work training and education vary across EEA states, the regulatory status of the profession is also widely varied. For example, the literature scoping exercise undertaken for this research indicates that the title of 'social worker' is not protected in Sweden; while it is in Norway only for some parts of the profession. In France, social workers are provided with a professional ID card and badge, irrespective of the agency for which they are currently working. The literature search shows that the title appears to have been legally protected in Iceland since 1975 (European Commission 1996; Reimavuo 1997; Júlíusdóttir 2006; Svensson 2010).

Within this context of extreme diversity, it is vital that the GSCC, as the regulatory body for the social work profession in England, establishes a detailed understanding of social work regulation and qualifications within the European Economic Area, in order to facilitate the process of qualification recognition and the registration of EEA qualified social workers whilst achieving the required standards, consistency and fairness.

Research also indicates that recognition of social work qualifications from certain European states, particularly the A8 and A2 countries<sup>4</sup>, can be difficult to undertake

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<sup>4</sup> 'A8 countries' are those which joined the EU in 2004 but were identified to be low-income states. This group includes: Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia. Bulgaria and Romania joined the EU in January 2007 and are often called the 'A2 nations'. A2 and A8

(Hussein and Clarke 2010; Hussein, Stevens and Manthorpe 2010). The main reasons for this relate to the fact that social workers are represented within a great number of different professional groups in different European countries. In some countries they are united within one, whilst in others they are found in several groups.

## **SOCIAL WORK TRAINING AND QUALIFICATIONS IN THE EEA**

During the past decade, social work training in Europe has been characterised by progressive 'academisation' and was directly affected by the changes in university structures triggered by the Bologna Process (1999). This process aims to achieve greater compatibility between European qualifications. In relation to social work education, the European Association of Universities considers it doubtful that reform would be implemented if left to the goodwill of educational institutions. Currently, there are European countries signed to the Bologna Process in which such regulations are not yet established (Martínez-Román 2007). The legal regulation of qualification frameworks at a national level has been suggested as one possible solution to these difficulties.

At the beginning of the 2004-2005 academic year, the two-cycle (undergraduate and postgraduate) structure for social work education was established in all Bologna Declaration signatory countries, with the exception of Andorra, the German-speaking community of Belgium, Hungary, Portugal, Romania, Spain and Sweden (USAID 2008). Spain, Romania and Hungary have subsequently approved consenting laws (Martínez-Román 2007). Examples of countries already working with the undergraduate and graduate levels are: Denmark, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Finland, Lithuania, Norway and Poland. There is also the possibility of undertaking doctoral studies in some countries, such as the Czech Republic, Estonia, Finland, Italy and Poland. However, even within this group the number of credits (ECTs) considered sufficient for a degree (Bachelor) of Social Work varies from country to country.

## **APPLICATIONS TO THE GSCC FROM THE EEA**

To provide some context to the research **Table 1** sets out the number of applications received from different EEA countries during 2009-2010. In the last couple of years a considerable number of applications were received from Romania and Poland, which reflects a general trend identified in previous research. Over a hundred applications were received from each of Romania, Poland and Germany during 2009 and 2010. Between 50 and 100 applications were received from each of the Irish Republic (77) and Portugal (62). Between 25 and 40 applications were received during this period by the GSCC from a number of countries including Spain, Sweden, Hungary and Lithuania. The data indicate the variability in the volume of applications from different EEA countries; however, the pattern of applications is not static and is expected to change further over the coming years. The immigration cap on non-EEA professionals working

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nationals currently have similar entry rights to people from other EEA/EU countries but there are some restrictions on their rights to work in the UK.



in the United Kingdom is likely to affect the distribution of to a higher mobility of professionals within Europe. It is likely that in the near future the regulatory body in England will see more applicants from countries where currently there are very few active applicants.

**Table 1 Number of applications during 2009-2010 from different EEA countries**

<b>Country</b>	<b>Number of applications in 2009-2010</b>
<b>Romania</b>	133
<b>Poland</b>	110
<b>Germany</b>	106
<b>Irish Republic</b>	77
<b>Portugal</b>	62
<b>Spain</b>	39
<b>Sweden</b>	34
<b>Hungary</b>	25
<b>Lithuania</b>	25
<b>Bulgaria</b>	18
<b>Slovakia</b>	18
<b>The Netherlands</b>	15
<b>Italy</b>	12
<b>Denmark</b>	11
<b>Czech Republic</b>	10
<b>France</b>	10
<b>Greece</b>	9
<b>Finland</b>	7
<b>Latvia</b>	7
<b>Switzerland</b>	7
<b>Belgium</b>	6
<b>Estonia</b>	6
<b>Slovenia</b>	5
<b>Austria</b>	4
<b>Iceland</b>	2
<b>Malta</b>	2
<b>Norway</b>	2
<b>Liechtenstein</b>	0
<b>Cyprus</b>	0
<b>Luxembourg</b>	0

## METHODS

The initial phase of the research included an investigation of documentation held by the GSCC in relation to social work regulation and qualifications across Europe. The GSCC holds these documents as a result of receiving registration applications from European nationals. Although many of these documents proved useful in relation to specific cases, the very nature of this evidence suggested that a more systematic gathering of specific and detailed information, in a standardised format was necessary.

An online questionnaire was developed seeking to collect information on the main aspects of social work regulation and training in each country. All 30 EEA countries were invited to complete the survey with the anticipation that 10 countries would respond. The focus of this research was primarily on information from competent authorities related to the regulatory process of social work in different European countries. This includes information on the qualification levels required for social work and recognized by the countries' competent authorities. The survey was designed to collect information on the following:

- the regulatory status and process for entering the social work profession;
- the duties or activities that are seen as social work;
- the qualifications that give access to the social work profession;
- the accreditation process and quality controls for social work awarding bodies and qualifications;
- how conduct, discipline and fitness to practise is managed;
- the arrangements for continuous professional development; and
- how we should exchange information with EEA countries in the future e.g. Internal Marketing Information (IMI) and European Certificate of Current Professional Standing.

The survey offered pre-coded choices as well as free text boxes for further information. The survey was in English but participants were invited to respond in their national language if they preferred. A number of countries responded in their national languages and these were translated at a later date. The online survey allowed respondents to provide answers as to whether social work and/or its education in that country was regulated.

The survey was sent to all 30 European Economic Area countries via the UK National Contact Point<sup>5</sup> along with a summary description of the social work profession in England in January 2011 (see Appendix I). The letter provided information in relation to the aims of the research, highlighting the mutual benefits of collating comparative information on social work profession and education across Europe. Following this invitation some of the country contact points were revised and invitations to participate in the survey (with a link) were redistributed on 7 February 2011. The survey remained 'live' until 18 March 2011 to enable a higher response rate, and three reminders were circulated during the course of the survey. After the initial stage of data analysis, when information was not clear or missing, we continued communication with the country contact points through e-mail.

Responses to the survey were complemented with a documentary analysis of communications and documents held by the GSCC. The research, however, does not compare social work education and regulatory systems across Europe (except for illustrative purposes).

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<sup>5</sup> The UK NCP is the National Contact Point for Professional Qualifications in the United Kingdom <http://www.europeopen.org.uk/>. They are part of a wider network of Contact Points in the European Union (EU), European Economic Area (EEA) and Switzerland. The function of UK NCP is to aid the mobility of professionals throughout Europe.

## **ONLINE SURVEY RESPONSE RATE**

The response rate to the survey and the level of engagement overall were higher than anticipated. There was no precedent for systematic consultation across all EEA social work competent authorities and it was therefore difficult to gauge at the outset the level of response that might be expected. Our initial target was to gather information from at least 10 countries; however, 19 countries completed the majority of the questions in the survey; three more completed a few questions. In addition three further countries provided us directly with information on social work regulation and training in their countries, and several other countries communicated with the research team.

## **RESPONSES**

Responses from different countries are categorised into five groups depending on level of engagement with this study.

Group I countries provided most or all of the information required:

- Iceland
- Latvia
- Switzerland
- Austria
- Poland – free text translated
- Germany – free text translated
- Belgium (French speaking community)
- Sweden
- Bulgaria
- Irish Republic
- Liechtenstein
- Malta
- Finland
- Cyprus
- Slovenia – free text translated
- Estonia
- Denmark
- The Netherlands
- Romania

Group II countries accessed the survey but did not provide much information:

- Spain
- Norway
- Luxembourg

Group III countries provided documentation and information via emails, but did not complete the online survey:

- France: provided several useful documents in French. After consulting the GSCC, it was decided that these would be translated and analysed by the GSCC outside of this research.

- Greece: provided a summary of social work regulation and training status via email which is discussed as part of this research.
- Czech Republic: provided a document in Czech, the Social Service Act 2006, and its translation in English, which is used as part of this research.

Group IV countries made communication but did not provide detailed information:

- Italy provided a new contact after the closure of the survey. Due to the short time scale of this project, it was not possible to follow up communications with the new contact within the scope of this research.
- Hungary had been in recent communication with the GSCC and supplied information that requires uploading onto the GSCC website. Until that was achieved Hungary felt unable to complete our survey but have been in contact with the GSCC and researchers and exchanges of information are taking place.
- Belgium, Flemish speaking community, provided a further contact point. A new invitation and a reminder were sent to this contact but no response was received before the closure date of the survey.

Group V countries that did not complete the survey or make further communication with the research team:

- Lithuania
- Slovakia
- Portugal

In the next sections we provide summary of the overall findings of the project then the main part of the report details findings related to specific information for each of the European countries covered in the research, indicating the source of information in each case. The report does not attempt to draw comparisons across Europe, but is focused on providing information on a country-by-country basis. Further analysis based on such data will seek to draw a comparative picture of social work training, qualifications and regulations.

## SUMMARY FINDINGS

This section sets out a summary of the findings contained in the later sections of the report. Findings can be broken down into two categories:

- Social Work Professional Activities in EEA Countries
- Social Work Regulatory and Professional Bodies in EEA Countries.
- 

More detail on the nature of social work education training and regulation in each of the EEA countries where responses were received can be found in the section for each country.

### SOCIAL WORK PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES IN EEA COUNTRIES

The survey collected information on the activities understood as social work within each country, requesting participants to select as many activities as applicable from a pre-coded list. It should be noted, however, that specific definitions of activities might vary from country to country. Figure 1 sets out the number of respondents who noted that a particular activity of social work was common to their country.

**Figure 1 Activities classed as social work across the EEA by survey respondents.**

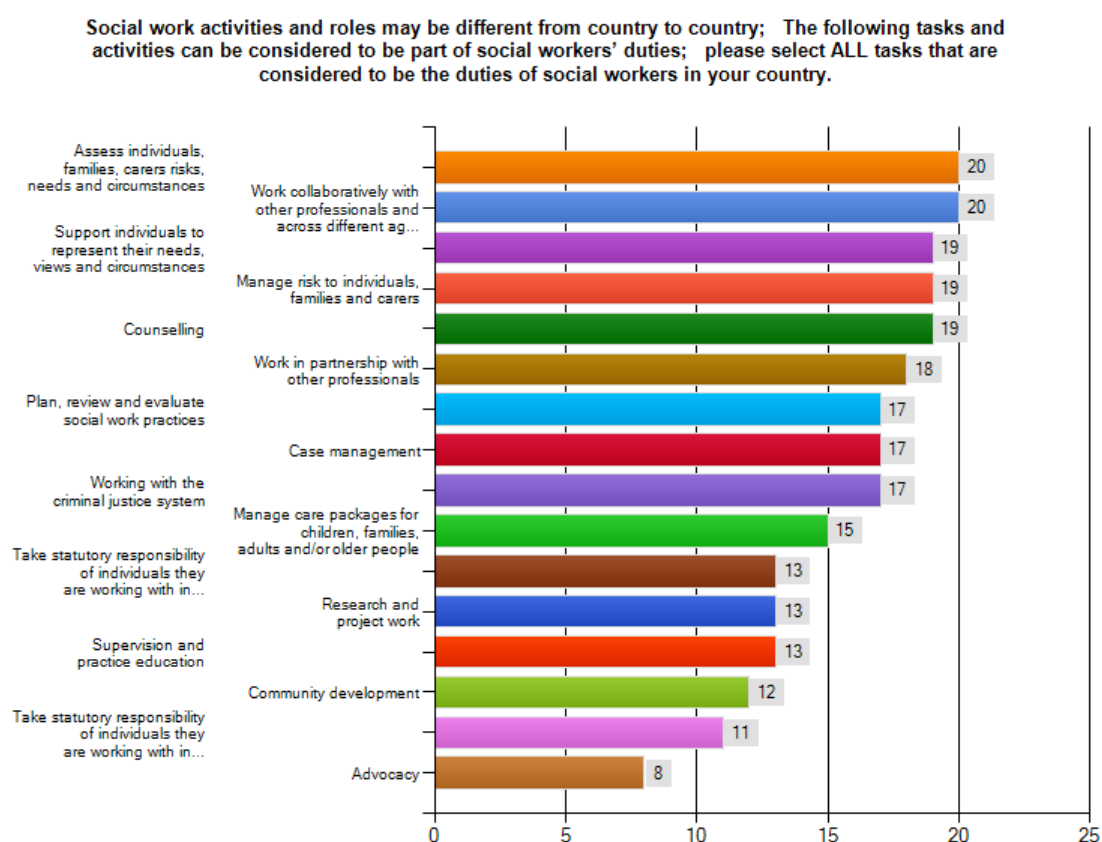


Figure 1 shows that ‘assessing individuals, families, carers, risks, needs and circumstance’ and ‘work collaboratively with other professionals and across different agencies’ are the activities most commonly associated with social workers across Europe. It is interesting to note that only 13 and 11 countries respectively indicated that social workers’ activities include ‘taking statutory responsibility for individuals they are working with’, including children and their families and people with learning disabilities and mental health problems.

### **Social Work Regulatory and Professional Bodies in EEA Countries**

Table 2 presents a summary of whether the social work profession is regulated and whether social work education and training is regulated (or geared towards the profession of social work) in different EEA countries according to the survey responses. Among the 22 countries completing the survey, 12 (54.5%) indicated that social work is considered to be a regulated profession according to Article 3.1(a) of the Directive. Out of the 10 countries which indicated that the profession is not regulated, half (5) indicated that social work education and training within their countries are regulated and geared towards the profession of social work.

The majority of countries (n=13) have recognised (usually national) social work professional bodies. In addition the survey collected information on whether each country intends to use the Internal Marketing Information (IMI) – a mechanism for exchanging information between EEA countries on issues relating to the Directive, and the European Certificate of Current Professional Status. Out of the 22 countries responding to the survey, 12 indicated their intention to use IMI, 4 indicated that they do not intend to use it and 6 did not provide information (see Table 20 and Figure 5, Appendix II).

**Table 2 The regulation of social work and its education in EEA Countries**

<b>Country</b>	<b>Whether social work is considered to be a regulated profession according to article 3.1(a)</b>	<b>Whether education and training is regulated and geared to the profession of social work</b>
<b>Austria</b>	✓	✓
<b>Belgium</b>	X	✓
<b>Bulgaria</b>	X	✓
<b>Cyprus</b>	✓	✓
<b>Czech Republic<sup>6</sup></b>	X	✓
<b>Denmark</b>	X	X
<b>Estonia</b>	X	X
<b>Finland</b>	✓	✓
<b>France</b>	NR <sup>7</sup>	NR
<b>Germany</b>	✓	✓
<b>Greece<sup>8</sup></b>	✓	✓
<b>Hungary</b>	NR	NR
<b>Iceland</b>	✓	✓
<b>Irish Republic</b>	✓	✓
<b>Italy</b>	NR	NR
<b>Latvia</b>	X	X
<b>Liechtenstein</b>	X	X
<b>Lithuania</b>	NR	NR
<b>Luxembourg</b>	✓	✓
<b>Malta</b>	✓	✓
<b>Netherlands</b>	X	X
<b>Norway</b>	X	✓
<b>Poland</b>	✓	✓
<b>Portugal</b>	NR	NR
<b>Romania</b>	✓	✓
<b>Slovak Republic</b>	NR	NR
<b>Slovenia</b>	✓	✓
<b>Spain</b>	X	✓
<b>Sweden</b>	X	✓
<b>Switzerland</b>	✓	✓

<sup>6</sup> Based on supplementary documents received as part of this research.

<sup>7</sup> No survey response from this country but documentation received.

<sup>8</sup> Based on supplementary documents received as part of this research.

# COUNTRY BY COUNTRY DETAILED INFORMATION ON SOCIAL WORK PROFESSION, EDUCATION AND REGULATION

The following country-by-country detailed information is mainly based on the online survey responses or further direct communication; some information was received directly from contacts in other countries. The data are complemented by other information extracted from the documentation analysis, indicated as supplementary information; sources of documents used are also indicated.<sup>9</sup>

## 1. ROMANIA

The following information is based on the online response received from the President of the national body for social work, in relation to the whole country.

### Social work activities

The following activities and tasks were selected as reflecting those performed by social workers in Romania. It should be noted that the meaning and exact definition of these activities may be different from that usually assumed to be the case in England.

- Assess individuals', families', and carers' risks, needs and circumstances;
- Plan, review and evaluate social work practices;
- Support individuals to represent their needs, views and circumstances;
- Manage risk to individuals, families and carers;
- Work in partnership with other professionals;
- Take statutory responsibility of individuals they are working with including children and their families;
- Take statutory responsibility of individuals they are working with including people with learning disabilities and mental health problems;
- Case management;
- Manage care packages for children, families, adults and/or older people;
- Advocacy;
- Community development;
- Counselling;
- Working with the criminal justice system;
- Research and project work; and
- Supervision and practice education.

### Social work regulation

Social work is considered to be a **regulated** profession in Romania. It is governed by Law 466/2004 on the status of social workers and the law on the national social assistance system - Law 47/2006. There is one national regulatory body, the National College of Social Workers (contact details available upon request), which is responsible for regulating social work only. Social worker is a **protected title** in Romania: '*asistent social*'.

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<sup>9</sup> Direct extracts are indicated through indentation and use of italics; translated text is identified.



This title can be held by:

1. A person who receives a university diploma within a superior studies unit specializing in the field, long length type, 4 years, certified according to the law.
2. A person who achieves a graduation diploma from a higher education unit specializing in the field, short length type, 3 years, certified according to the law.
3. A person who holds a diploma of social work, certified according to the law.
4. A person who holds a diploma of social work issued or recognized in one of the states which are members of the European Union, other states of the European Economic Area and the Swiss Confederation.

Social workers are required to **register** before they are able to practise. They register with the regulatory body named above, and there are no regional differences in this process. A **licence/certificate** is required to practise. This registration process must be completed only once and stays valid for life. There are minimum requirements for continuous professional development: the professional (social worker) must practise social work without interruption (however, it is not clear from the response for how long without interruption) and must pay his/her annual fee. If the professional does not pay the annual fee, they are removed from the National Register of Social Workers in Romania (RNASR). There is no renewal process and there are no regional differences in this process. Criminal record or police checks are required as part of the registration process.

There is a public-facing register that lists all registrants; it can be found online at: <http://www.cnasr.ro/stiri-11-0-ro-Partea-I>.

The respondent indicated that there is a recognised social professional body in Romania (but no contact details or name of the body were provided).

### **Social work education**

The following qualification gives the holder eligibility to register as a social worker:

1. *Asistent social* (social worker): specialized superior studies unit, duration 4 years (pre-Bologna), 3 years (Bologna).

### *Supplementary information*

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For postgraduate or masters studies, there is a particular procedure: the applicant faxes the programme for masters or postgraduate studies to the C(NASR), which goes into the first meeting of the Continuing Professional Education Committee. The Committee then decides if the subject on the programme can be considered to be a specialism in social work or not.

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(Source: document 16.doc, Documentation analysis)

No information was provided in relation to practice placements, fitness to practise or methods of information exchange and IMI.

## **2. POLAND**

Information was provided by the chief expert in the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, Department of Social Assistance and Integration. Data were provided for the whole country.

### **Social work activities**

The survey asked participants to indicate the activities considered to be performed by social workers in their countries. They were offered a pre-coded list of activities in addition to a text box for additional information.

In Poland the following activities were considered to be performed by social workers:

- Assess individuals', families', carers' risks, needs and circumstances;
- Plan, review and evaluate social work practices;
- Support individuals to represent their needs, views and circumstances;
- Manage risk to individuals, families and carers;
- Work in partnership with other professionals;
- Take statutory responsibility of individuals they are working with including children and their families;
- Take statutory responsibility of individuals they are working with including people with learning disabilities and mental health problems;
- Work collaboratively with other professionals and across different agencies;
- Case management;
- Manage care packages for children, families, adults and/or older people;
- Advocacy;
- Community development;
- Counselling;
- Working with the criminal justice system;
- Research and project work; and
- Supervision and practice education.

### **Other activities [translated]**

Social workers in Poland constitute a professional group that does not have its own professional organisation. The professional responsibilities of this group were defined in Article 119 (1) of the Social Assistance Act of 12 March 2004 (consolidated text: Journal of Laws from 2009 No 175, item 1362, as amended). Social workers' responsibilities include, specifically:

- 1) Social work;
- 2) Analysing and evaluating circumstances where social assistance is required and making it possible to obtain this assistance;
- 3) Providing information, advice and assistance on resolving difficult situations in life to people who, as a result of that help, will be able independently to resolve the problems that are the cause of their difficult circumstances; effective use of legal provisions in the realisation of these responsibilities;
- 4) Assisting persons in difficult circumstances to obtain advice on how to solve problems and obtain assistance from the appropriate state and local institutions and non-governmental organisations as well as providing support to obtain this help;

- 5) Providing assistance in accordance with the rules of professional ethics;
- 6) Stimulating community action and inspiring self-help activities in order to satisfy the needs of individuals, families, groups and communities;
- 7) Cooperation with other specialists in order to combat and reduce the pathology and consequences of negative social circumstances, mitigate the effects of poverty;
- 8) Initiating new forms of assistance to persons and families that are in difficult circumstances and encourage them to approach institutions that provide services to improve the situation of such persons and families;
- 9) Participating in inspiring, preparing, implementing and developing regional and local social assistance programmes to improve quality of life.

When carrying out the tasks listed above, social workers must:

- 1) Abide by rules of professional ethics;
- 2) Work for the good of the individuals and families that they serve, respect their dignity and their right to determine their own future;
- 3) Combat practices that are inhumane and discriminatory towards individuals, families or groups;
- 4) Provide applicants with full information about the payments to which they are entitled and the types of assistance that are available;
- 5) Keep confidential all the information that is obtained during their professional activities, even after leaving employment, unless this is harmful to the individuals or families;
- 6) Improve professional qualifications by taking part in training and continuing professional development.

Social workers have exclusive rights as regards carrying out the family environment interviews referred to in Article 107 of the Social Assistance Act of 12 March 2004 cited above. Family environment interviews are carried out to establish the personal, family, income and asset circumstances of individuals and families, to provide an opinion when looking for a foster family where this relates to a procedure to find a foster family, to allocate financial assistance to cover part of the costs for the maintenance of a child, to assess the welfare of a child placed with a foster family, to allocate financial assistance for independent living and financial assistance to continue in education and to send a child into full-time care. Social workers are also involved in implementing the provisions of the Act of 29 July 2005 on Combating Violence in the Family (Journal of Laws of 20 September 2005, No 180, item 1493) and in activities relating to the implementation of the Programme Against Violence, which arose from the cooperation between the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy and the Ministry for Internal Affairs and Administration, the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of National Education.

The principal objective of the Programme is to reduce the occurrence of violence within families, to improve the effectiveness of protection provided to victims of domestic violence and also to increase the availability of help and the effectiveness of interventions and corrective activities against persons responsible for violence in families. Social workers are employed primarily by social work organisations, which include social work centres, family assistance centres, social assistance facilities and care homes. Social workers can also be employed by other institutions, in particular by

organisational bodies responsible for employment and combating unemployment, hospitals, prisons, as also by non-governmental organisations, to fulfil the social work obligations of these institutions.

### **Regulation**

Social work is considered to be a **regulated** profession in Poland. The following provisions regulate the right to work as a social worker: the Social Assistance Act of 12 March 2004 (consolidated text: Journal of Laws from 2009 No 175, item 1362, with subsequent amendments) and the Act of 16 February 2007 amending the Social Assistance Act (Journal of Laws No 48, item 320).

There is more than one national regulatory body for social work in Poland. The following contact was provided:

Address: ul. Nowogrodzka 1/3/5  
Website: [www.mpips.gov.pl](http://www.mpips.gov.pl)  
Telephone: 48226610491

This body is only responsible for regulating social work. As described in Article 3.1 (a) of the directive, the title 'social worker' is **protected** in Poland. The title in the official language is '*pracownik socjalny*'. The social work profession in Poland is a profession that is regulated and subject to specific legal regulations as regards authorisation to work in that field. The rights to carry out the work of a social worker are defined exclusively and directly in the regulations of the Social Assistance Act. Individuals who are commencing higher education or continuing in their studies, as well as graduates who do not fulfil the qualification requirements to work as a social worker set out in the provisions of the Social Assistance Act, cannot be employed as social workers. Individuals who do not fulfil the requirements specified in the Social Assistance Act cannot be employed as social workers or carry out the responsibilities of a social worker including, specifically, conducting family environment interviews and providing or suggesting forms of assistance on that basis. Pursuant to the current provisions in Article 107 of the Social Assistance Act, environment interviews as well as social work are competencies belonging to social workers and other workers do not have the appropriate authorisations in this area.

Social workers in Poland **are not required to register**<sup>10</sup> with a regulatory body before they are able to practise. There is **no** recognised social work professional body in Poland.

### **Social work education**

Education and training is **regulated**. The following qualifications are geared to the practise of social work:

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<sup>10</sup> Further clarity is needed on the status of the Certificate issued by the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy confirming a qualification that gives eligibility to practise social work in Poland.

Name in official language:	Dyplom potwierdzający uzyskanie tytułu zawodowego w zawodzie pracownik socjalny
Name in English:	Diploma of acquisition of professional title in the profession: social worker (professional title certificate)
Academic level as set out in Article 11:	1) C or 2) D
Length of study:	1) Post-secondary vocation level 2.5-year cycle or 2) Colleges of social work 3-year cycle

Name in official language:	Dyplom ukończenia studiów wyższych zawodowych (licencjat na kierunku praca socjalna)
Name in English:	Diploma of higher professional qualifications (bachelor's degree in social work)
Academic level as set out in Article 11:	D
Length of study:	3-year cycle

Name in official language:	Dyplom ukończenia studiów wyższych
Name in English:	Higher education diploma
Academic level as set out in Article 11:	D or E
Length of study:	3-year studies leading to Bachelor's degree - licencjat or 2-year programmes leading to the degree magister after three years of first cycle

Prior to 1992 social workers in Poland were educated to an intermediate professional level (post-secondary school), over a two-year period, after which they were awarded the title of social worker. After 1992 social workers in Poland were educated to an intermediate professional level (post-secondary school) over a two and a half year period, after which they were awarded the title of social worker; to a higher professional level (degree level) specialising in social work (professional colleges – three or three and a half years); to a higher professional level (three-year bachelor's degree) or Master's level (supplementary higher education or master's degree) in the following disciplines: education, politics, social policy, psychology and family studies (and, from 2004, a social work specialisation). However, no educational standards and periods of social work practice were specified for this specialisation - every institution organised its own (individual) programme of education.

At present social workers are educated as following: in three-year post-A-level colleges for social service employees, starting from 2005; in three-year courses of higher education (bachelor's degree) studying social work, which course was included for the first time in 2006 in the list of courses approved by the Regulation of 13 June 2006 issued by the Minister of Education and Higher Education concerning course titles (Journal of Laws No 121, item 838); and also through higher education, through a course preparing the student for work as a social worker, as specified in the Regulation

of 25 January 2008 issued by the Minister of Labour and Social Policy (Journal of Laws 2008 No 27, item 158), starting from the 2008/2009 academic year. From 2014 training for social work will be via 'social work' studies:

- 1) Level one - three-year professional (bachelor's degree); and most probably
- 2) Level two studies - a two-year supplementary course (master's degree) studying 'social work'.

Preparatory work is currently underway within educational institutions to develop the standards and applications that will make it possible to obtain consent from the Ministry of Education and Higher Education to offer these courses. Other forms of training will most probably be discontinued. However all those who were granted the right to work as social workers on the basis of earlier regulations including the Social Assistance Act of 29 November 1990 (consolidated text: Journal of Laws 1993 No 13, item 60) will retain their rights. Additional note: in 1990, as a result of the regime changes in Poland, over 2,500 social assistance centres were created but, at that time, there were not enough social workers or higher educational courses in social work. The social workers at that time, a small number in view of the new challenges and social problems (chiefly graduates of post A-level colleges), could not have coped with the enormous number of new social work and social assistance responsibilities. In these circumstances it was decided to allow graduates of related courses to work in the professional of social worker.

This latter group, employed as social workers without specific training in social work, are supplementing their knowledge and skills through numerous training courses and are benefiting from the help of more experienced employees. The reorganisation of qualification standards for social work along the lines of higher education studies was a result of the creation in Poland in 2006 of a separate discipline under the name of social work. It should be pointed out here that, as regards those with authorisation to work within the regulated profession of social work following the completion of higher education, they will be able to keep the rights they have acquired (under the provisions of the Social Assistance Act). During their studies, these people did not achieve the educational standards for social work, as opposed to graduates of the post A-level schools, colleges and institutions of higher education indicated below, who were trained in accordance with the standards contained in legal regulations, i.e. two and a half years' post-secondary school education (vocational title: social worker); three-year colleges for social service employees (vocational title: social worker); three-year higher education course (bachelor's) in social work; and higher education specialising in providing a preparation for the vocation of social work on the basis of the Regulation of 25 January 2008 issued by the Minister of Labour and Social Policy (Journal of Laws 2008 No 27 item 158).

There is a system in place to ensure consistent standards of training of social workers. Educational standards were specified as follows: 1) social work degrees - 2200 hours and 15 weeks of practical work; 2) higher education courses providing a preparation for the profession of social work - 330 hours of theory and 220 hours of practice (number of hours given without taking into account the remaining number of hours, which are set individually for a given discipline as specified in regulations issued by the Minister of Education and Higher Education); and 3) colleges for social service employees - 2,915 hours of studies, of which 2,355 hours of theory and 560 hours of practical work.

There is **no** online system to check accreditation of awarding bodies. As part of their continuing professional development, social workers with a minimum of 3 years' or 5 years' social work experience can undergo training in, respectively, level I or level II social work. Minimum course requirements for these specialisations were specified in the Regulation of 2 August 2005 issued by the Minister of Social Policy concerning specialisation in the social work profession (Journal of Laws No 154, item 1289). The courses include 210 hours (level I) or 240 hours (level II) of study as well as writing a thesis and passing an examination before an examination commission. Specialist training is provided by various entities provided that they obtain (after submitting an application) consent from the Minister of Labour and Social Policy to run the courses. There is **no** qualification accreditation body for social work in Poland.

### **Practice placements**

All practice placement days are required to take place during the course and are assessed by qualified social workers. The following are responsible for organising practical work and for contact with employers who take on students for practical work: the practical work manager (in colleges for social service employees) or, in institutions of higher education, a designated employee. Students carry out practical work in social work centres under the supervision of experienced social workers designated by the centre manager. We do not have detailed information on this topic as there is no accreditation system for practical training.

Different qualifications require a different number of practice placement days:

- 1) Three year bachelor's course in social work - 15 weeks of practical work;
- 2) Specialisation providing a preparation for the social work profession within higher education - 220 hours of practical work; and
- 3) Colleges for social service employees - 560 hours of practical work. As regards the remaining group of graduates referred to earlier, who have already acquired authorisation to work as social workers, there are no such standards.

### **Fitness to practise**

There are **no** standards to monitor fitness to practise and suitability for social work in Poland. Exchanging information about Polish nationals regarding disciplinary action or criminal sanctions in England can be difficult. Pursuant to the Personal Data Protection Act and the lack of specific regulations concerning the requirement to check the criminal record of social workers, employers cannot request information concerning the criminal records of social workers. If an employer should break the law in this regard he can be charged and taken to court and also fined.

### **Further information**

Poland did not reach an agreement of common understanding of social work profession or education with other European countries. Poland is intending to use IMI in the future, but does not use the European Certificate of Current Professional Status and does not intend to use the certificate in the future. This may in fact be possible in the future, following the creation of level II social work courses and the creation of a social work accreditation system. It is not, however, possible at present.

### 3. GERMANY

Information received from Referentin, in relation to the whole country.

#### **Social work activities**

- Assess individuals', families', carers' risks, needs and circumstances;
- Plan, review and evaluate social work practices;
- Support individuals to represent their needs, views and circumstances;
- Manage risk to individuals, families and carers;
- Work in partnership with other professionals;
- Work collaboratively with other professionals and across different agencies;
- Case management;
- Manage care packages for children, families, adults and/or older people;
- Community development;
- Counselling;
- Working with the criminal justice system;
- Research and project work; and
- Supervision and practice education.

Other activities [translated]:

- Clinical social work;
- Involvement in social policy; and
- Therapy work.

#### **Social work regulation**

According to the response received, in Germany social work is a **regulated**<sup>11</sup> profession. It is regulated by social skills recognition laws in each jurisdiction [translated].

There is more than one regulatory body for social work.

For Berlin: The Senate Administration for Education, Science and Research.

Website: [http://www.berlin.de/sen/jugend/staatl\\_erkennung\\_fuer\\_sozialberufe/](http://www.berlin.de/sen/jugend/staatl_erkennung_fuer_sozialberufe/).

There is further information provided for different regions:

Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sports of Baden-Württemberg; Bavarian State Ministry of Education and Culture; Department for Education, Science and Research, Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports of Brandenburg; Bremen's Senator for Education and Science; State Portal Hamburg authority for school and training; Hessian Ministry of Culture; government of Mecklenburg-Vorpommern Ministry of Education, Science and Culture; Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania, Lower Saxony Ministry of Culture; Ministry of Education and Training of North Rhine-Westphalia; Ministry of Education, Science, Youth and Culture of Rhineland-Palatinate; Saarland Ministry of Education; Ministry of Education and Sports, Ministry of Culture of Saxony-Anhalt; Ministry of

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<sup>11</sup> Further clarity is needed about the regulatory status of the profession given variance with prior information showing that the profession is not regulated but training is regulated (Article 13(2)).



Education and Culture of the Land Schleswig-Holstein; Thuringia Ministry of Education, Science and Culture.

These regulatory bodies also regulate other professions, for example, graduates of the course 'Education in Childhood'. For further information see:

[http://www.berlin.de/sen/jugend/staatl\\_anerkennung\\_fuer\\_sozialberufe/](http://www.berlin.de/sen/jugend/staatl_anerkennung_fuer_sozialberufe/).

According to Article 3.1 (a) the title of social worker is **protected** in Germany. These are the protected titles in German:

- Staatlich anerkannter Sozialarbeiter/Sozialpädagoge, (state approved social worker or social worker);
- Staatlich anerkannte Sozialarbeiterin/Sozialpädagogin (female workers under the same title).

Social workers are required to **register** with a regulatory body before they are able to practise. They register with the above-named regulatory bodies. There are no regional differences indicated in relation to the process of the registration. The registration is required only once and stays valid for life.

A **licence/certificate to practice** is **required**. There are **minimum requirements for continuous professional development**, which form part of the registration process. These include the professional ethical principles of the German Professional Association of Social Work, and the implementation of quality management and quality assurance models. There are some differences in such requirements: these are not necessarily regional, but depend on the various institutions in which social workers are employed.

For further information, see also: DBSH Office Berlin (association office), Rungestraße 22-24, 10179 Berlin. Website: <http://www.dbsh.de/>.

No public-facing register that lists all registrants is available. Social workers require police clearance (which seems to be comparable to CRB in the UK). There are national social work professional bodies in Germany: the DBSH (member of the International Federation of Social Workers), <http://www.dbsh.de/> and JFMK, [www.jfmk.de](http://www.jfmk.de).

### **Social work education**

The following qualifications give the holder eligibility for registration:

- Social work (Studiengang Soziawesen/Soziale Arbeit), diploma and BA levels; 3 years duration.

More information about qualifications [translated]:

*'Study of social work and social education including integrated practical training at a state or state-recognised university of applied sciences for social work and social education, leading to a diploma or Bachelor of Arts.'*

The respondent indicated that there is no qualification accreditation body for social work in Germany. There is no online system to check accreditation of awarding bodies.

**Practice placements**

Two internship semesters of 20 weeks each are required- these are assessed by qualified social workers [translated].

*'Students produce weekly activity reports. During the internship semesters, students take part in theory-related seminars. The seminars serve as an exchange of experience. Supervision also takes place during the seminars.'*

**Fitness to practise**

There are no standards in place to monitor fitness to practise and suitability for social work in Germany.

**Further information**

Germany has reached a common understanding of social work profession and education with other European countries through the International Federation of Social Workers (IFSW) and the International Association of Schools of Social Work (IASSW). Germany uses the European Certificate of current professional status. No information is provided in relation to information exchange and the use of IMI.

#### 4. CYPRUS

Information received from the Chairman of the Cyprus Registration Council for Professional Social Workers, in relation to the whole country.

##### **Social work activities**

The following activities, selected from a pre-coded list of activities, were regarded to be performed by social workers in Cyprus:

- Assess individuals', families', carers' risks, needs and circumstances;
- Plan, review and evaluate social work practices;
- Support individuals to represent their needs, views and circumstances;
- Manage risk to individuals, families and carers;
- Work in partnership with other professionals;
- Take statutory responsibility of individuals they are working with including children and their families;
- Take statutory responsibility of individuals they are working with including people with learning disabilities and mental health problems;
- Work collaboratively with other professionals and across different agencies;
- Case management;
- Manage care packages for children, families, adults and/or older people;
- Advocacy;
- Community development;
- Counselling;
- Working with the criminal justice system;
- Research and project work; and
- Supervision and practice education.

The respondent indicated that supervision and practice education is under re-negotiation.

*'We have submitted a number of additional articles for the current legislation, in which we would like to clarify who is eligible to supervise both professionals and students. We would like to believe [that] by summer 2011, it will be accepted by the parliament.'*

##### **Social work regulation**

In Cyprus, social work is a **regulated** profession. It is governed by the Registration Law for Professional Social Workers (translation) 2000. The original Greek name is: 'περί Εγγραφής Επαγγελματιών Κοινωνικών Λειτουργών Νόμο του' 2000. This law was last updated in 2009. It is regulated by one national regulatory body, the Cyprus Registration Council for Professional Social Workers. The respondent indicated that in two months a website is anticipated to be in place listing all relevant information. This body is only responsible for registering social workers.

According to Article 3.1 (a) of the Directive, the title of social worker is a **protected title** in Cyprus; 'ΚΟΙΝΩΝΙΚΗ ΕΡΓΑΣΙΑ'.

##### **Registration process**

Social workers in Cyprus are required to register with a regulatory body, the Registration Council, and there are no regional differences in this process. No

licence/certificate to practise is required; registration is required only once and stays valid for life. There are minimum requirements for continuous professional development, associated with the new legislation (still to be approved by Parliament). To renew their licence, social workers need to participate in a minimum 5 days' training over a three-year period. However, there are currently no such obligations. There are no regional differences in these proposed requirements. There is no public-facing register listing all registrants.

Criminal records or police checks are required to register and all applicants have to submit a clear record validated by police. There is a recognised national social work professional body in Cyprus: the Cyprus Association of Social Workers; [www.casw.org.cy](http://www.casw.org.cy).

### **Social work education**

All professional social workers working in the Republic of Cyprus must register with the Registration Council to be able to practise under the professional title of 'social worker'. Social work in Cyprus is a graduate profession (4 year BA and/or BSc degree). It is an applied discipline which includes both academic and practice learning (1200 hours). The Registration Council regulates social work practice to make sure it meets the profession's standards and code of ethics. As higher (university) education is relatively new, the current law does not include a formal process to assure the quality of education. However, the respondent indicated that informal discussions are taking place with academic institutions.

*'We believe that with the new amendments, the Registration Council will monitor closer the academic curriculum to meet high standards.'*

The following qualifications give the holder eligibility to register:

Name in official language:	ΠΤΥΧΙΟ ΣΤΗΝ ΚΟΙΝΩΝΙΚΗ ΕΡΓΑΣΙΑ
Name in English:	Bachelor in Social Work
Academic level:	University level
Length of study:	4 years

Name in official language:	ΜΕΤΑΠΤΥΧΙΑΚΟ ΣΤΗΝ ΚΟΙΝΩΝΙΚΗ ΕΡΓΑΣΙΑ
Name in English:	Masters in Social Work
Academic level:	Postgraduate study (University level)
Length of study:	1 year

For people who apply for a social worker's licence holding a Master's degree, there is some differentiation. If the first degree is not in social work, a practicum of 1200 hours in practice fieldwork is required, as well as academic learning (equivalent to ECTS) in social work methods (individuals, groups and community work). An exemption may be granted, if a social work licence from another European country's registration body is submitted along with the applicant's academic qualifications. With the new legislation, a professional social worker who is registered as a 'social worker' in another European country will be eligible to work, without applying for a Cypriot licence, for a period of three months. There is a qualification accreditation body for social work in Cyprus: the Ministry of Education and Culture (accredits the social work academic programmes; monitors and evaluates main purpose, goals and objectives).

### **Practice placements**

A minimum number of practice placements are usually required, in the range of 1200 hours. However, these are merely standard procedures currently followed by social work academic programmes, with no legislative requirements in place. All practice placement days are required to be undertaken during the course. It is common practice for the evaluation (supervision) to be held by two professionals: one is the practice teacher (professional who is responsible to supervise the student in the fieldwork placement); the other is the academic supervisor (usually a faculty member who supervises the student on a weekly basis). Both of them are, in most cases, professional social workers. With the new legislation, it will be obligatory for both parties to be social workers and have additional academic and practical experience. There is no online system to check accreditation of awarding bodies.

### **Fitness to practise**

There are standards in place to monitor fitness to practise and suitability for social work in Cyprus. These relate to the Code of Ethics (additional legislation); this is similar to UK and USA code of ethics. It determines what good practice is, as well as professionals' obligations. It was voted for in 2004.

To exchange information about Cypriot nationals regarding disciplinary action or criminal sanctions in England that may have an impact on the pursuit of social work activities, contact should be made with Cyprus Registration Body, using different ways of communication or through IMI. The latter obliges the other party to respond. Moreover, all registered bodies have to inform all their members that information may be subject to disclosure to other relative bodies across EU, if such information is required.

### **Further information**

Cyprus has reached an agreement of common understanding of social work profession and education with **Greece**. Until recently the majority of professional social workers would graduate from Greek schools. The second choice was USA and then UK. Regarding UK graduates wishing to work in Greece, the respondent indicated that:

*'as long as the applicant will provide us with all the relevant info, the Registration will award to this person the necessary licence.'*

For countries outside Europe, additional details are required (such as recognition and accreditation of Bachelor's degree by the Ministry of Education). Cyprus is intending to use Internal Marketing Information (IMI), but they do not currently use the European Certificate of Current Professional Status. The respondent indicated that it has not been discussed at the moment, but they might use it if the demand and/or need arose.

## 5. DENMARK

Information received from Head of Section, Copenhagen, in relation to the whole country.

### Social work activities

The following activities, selected from a pre-coded list of activities, were regarded to be performed by social workers in Denmark:

- Assess individuals', families', carers' risks, needs and circumstances;
- Plan, review and evaluate social work practices;
- Support individuals to represent their needs, views and circumstances;
- Manage risk to individuals, families and carers;
- Work in partnership with other professionals;
- Work collaboratively with other professionals and across different agencies;
- Case management;
- Counselling; and
- Working with the criminal justice system.

No other activities were identified in the free text.

### Social work regulation

In Denmark social work is **not** a **regulated** profession. There is a recognised national social work professional body: Danish Association of Social Workers, <http://www.socialrdg.dk/>.

### Social work education

Education and training is **not regulated** in Denmark and is not geared to the profession of social work.

The following qualification gives the holder eligibility to be a social worker in Denmark:

Name in official language:	Socialrådgiveruddannelsen
Name in English:	Education as a social worker
Academic level:	Bachelor's degree
Length of study:	3-4 years

The usual qualification obtained by social workers is a bachelor's degree (210 ECTS). The education is regulated by Ministerial order no. 536, dated 28 June 2002. The order can be found (in Danish) at <https://www.retsinformation.dk/Forms/R0710.aspx?id=23957>. The Ministerial Order stipulates the structure and learning outcome of the education. A revised Ministerial Order will be in force from March 2011. The respondent indicated that:

*'In Denmark all higher education have to live up to international standards. As a part of the Bologna process Denmark has agreed to introduce an accreditation system in the European countries in order to increase transparency, mutual*

*recognition of diplomas and comparability in the countries quality assurance systems.'*

There is a qualification accreditation body for social work in Denmark: the Danish Evaluation Institute, EVA Østbanegade 55, 3 2100 København Ø. Phone + 45 35 55 01 01, email [eva@eva.dk](mailto:eva@eva.dk), website <http://english.eva.dk/>.

### **Supplementary information**

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Education as a social worker is a professional bachelor's degree offered by the public university colleges of:

- Esbjerg (<http://ucsyd.dk/international/>);
- Holstebro (<http://www.viauc.com/Pages/default.aspx>);
- Copenhagen (<http://www.ucc.dk/omucc/english/>);
- Sealand  
([http://www.ucsj.dk/content/dk/udenfor\\_menu/university\\_college\\_sealand](http://www.ucsj.dk/content/dk/udenfor_menu/university_college_sealand));
- Århus (<http://www.viauc.com/Pages/default.aspx>);
- Odense  
([http://www.ucl.dk/content/dk2/welcome\\_to\\_university\\_college\\_lillebalt/social\\_work\\_programme](http://www.ucl.dk/content/dk2/welcome_to_university_college_lillebalt/social_work_programme));
- Metropol, Copenhagen (<http://www.phmetropol.dk/International>);
- South Denmark (<http://ucsyd.dk/international>); and
- the University of Aalborg (<http://en.aau.dk/>)

The education is not a regulated professional qualification, cf. article 3.e in the directive 2005/36/EC. As an example of how education as a social worker is organised, please visit:

<http://www.viauc.com/exchange/socialworkinaarhus/Pages/default.aspx>

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(Source, 7.htm, documentation analysis)

### **Practice placements**

Students are required to complete four months' practice placement/internship during their fourth semester. All practice placement days are required to take place during the course: these are assessed by supervisors, who are not necessarily qualified social workers.

### **Fitness to practise**

There are standards in place to monitor fitness to practise and suitability for social work in Denmark. However, there are no legal systems that monitor fitness to practise and suitability for social work in Denmark regarding access to the profession as a social worker. There might be some professional standards in place, whereby the professional can be excluded from the relevant professional organisation if the professional does not live up to the standards, but this would not prevent the person from working as a social worker.

### **Further information**

Denmark is intending to use Internal Marketing Information (IMI), and they use the European Certificate of Current Professional status.

## 6. AUSTRIA

Response received from Contact Point Dir. 2005/36/EC, in relation to the whole country.

### Social work activities

The following activities and tasks were selected to reflect those performed by social workers in Austria:

- Assess individuals', families', carers' risks, needs and circumstances;
- Plan, review and evaluate social work practices;
- Support individuals to represent their needs, views and circumstances;
- Manage risk to individuals, families and carers;
- Work in partnership with other professionals;
- Take statutory responsibility of individuals they are working with including children and their families;
- Take statutory responsibility of individuals they are working with including people with learning disabilities and mental health problems;
- Work collaboratively with other professionals and across different agencies;
- Case management;
- Advocacy;
- Community development;
- Counselling;
- Working with the criminal justice system;
- Research and project work; and
- Supervision and practice education.

Other activities:

The respondent indicated that there is no general definition of social work in Austria, because there is no specific professional law or regulation on social work. For reasons of practicality, the contact point of Dir. 2005/36/EC defines social work as **regulated** social work, i.e. ***social work activities within the civil service***. In Austria, qualification requirements exist only for social work pursued by civil servants.

### Social work regulation

Social work is considered to be a **regulated** profession in Austria. Different Provinces have different laws governing social work.

Some of these variations are:

- For the province of Vienna: Gesetz betreffend die Jugendwohlfahrt (Wiener Jugendwohlfahrtsgesetz 1990 - WrJWG 1990);
- For the province of Burgenland: Burgenländisches Landesbeamten-Dienstrechtsgesetz 1997; Burgenländisches Jugendwohlfahrtsgesetz;
- For the province of Niederösterreich: DIENSTPRAGMATIK DER LANDESBEAMTEN 1972 (DPL 1972); Landes-Vertragsbedienstetengesetzes, LGBl. 2300-40; NÖ Bewertungs- und Referenzverwendungsordnung vom 4.2. 2008; NÖ GEMEINDEBEAMTENDIENSTORDNUNG 1976 (GBDO);
- For the province of Oberösterreich: Oö. Jugendwohlfahrtsgesetz 1991; Oö. Sozialberufegesetz; Oö. Landes-Vertragsbedienstetengesetz; Oö.



Landesbeamtengesetz 1993; Oö. Gemeinde-Dienstrechts-und Gehaltsgesetz 2002;

- For the province of Salzburg: Jugendwohlfahrts-Wohnformen-Verordnung LGBI Nr. 55/2000; Salzburger Kinder- und Jugendwohlfahrtsordnung 1992; Salzburger Landes-Beamtengesetz 1987;
- For the province of Steiermark: Gesetz über das Dienst- und Besoldungsrecht der Bediensteten des Landes Steiermark 2003; Steiermärkisches Jugendwohlfahrtsgesetz 1991;
- For the province of Tirol: Landesbeamtengesetz 1998; Landes-Vertragsbedienstetengesetz - L-VBG 2001; Sozialpädagogische Einrichtungen und Einrichtungen des betreuten Wohnens für Minderjährige, Richtlinien, LGBI. Nr. 63/2010; Tiroler Jugendwohlfahrtsgesetz 2002;
- For the province of Kärnten: Kärntner Jugendwohlfahrtsgesetz - K-JWG 1991;
- For the province of Vorarlberg: Gesetz über die öffentliche Jugendwohlfahrt.

There are several regulatory bodies.

For Vienna:

MAG 11 - Amt für Jugend und Familie

[anita.habacht@wien.gv.at](mailto:anita.habacht@wien.gv.at)

<http://www.wien.gv.at/amtshelfer/gesellschaft-soziales/magelf/ausbildung/gleichstellungsverfahren.html>

For the other eight Austrian provinces (Bundesländer) please contact the offices of the provincial governments:

- [post.vd@bgld.gv.at](mailto:post.vd@bgld.gv.at) (Burgenland)
- [post.abt2v@ktn.gv.at](mailto:post.abt2v@ktn.gv.at) (Kärnten)
- [post.lad1@noel.gv.at](mailto:post.lad1@noel.gv.at) (Niederösterreich)
- [verfd.post@ooe.gv.at](mailto:verfd.post@ooe.gv.at) (Oberösterreich)
- [landeslegistik@salzburg.gv.at](mailto:landeslegistik@salzburg.gv.at) (Salzburg)
- [fa1e@stmk.gv.at](mailto:fa1e@stmk.gv.at) (Steiermark)
- [verfassungsdienst@tirol.gv.at](mailto:verfassungsdienst@tirol.gv.at) (Tirol)
- [amtdvtr@vtr.gv.at](mailto:amtdvtr@vtr.gv.at) (Vorarlberg)

Within each of the provinces, regulatory bodies responsible for regulating social work are also responsible for legislating a wide range of other professions, including kindergarten, primary and secondary school teachers, sports, social affairs and all their civil servants.

Social worker is **not a protected title** in Austria; **social work activities** are regulated within the civil service. Social workers **are not required to register**.

### **Social work education**

In Austria, there are several regulated qualifications geared to the practise of social work; see especially;

[http://www.sozialarbeit.at/index.php?option=com\\_weblinks&catid=18&Itemid=387](http://www.sozialarbeit.at/index.php?option=com_weblinks&catid=18&Itemid=387).

The respondent did not have information about their academic levels. There are some systems in place to endure standards of training of social work; these relate to the

regulated educational institutions, which normally include quality standards within their regulations.

There is a recognised social work professional body in Austria: *Österreichischer Berufsverband der SozialarbeiterInnen* (see <http://www.sozialarbeit.at>); this is a national, private association, with regional branches. However, there is **no** qualification accreditation body for social work in Austria.

### **Practice placements**

The respondent indicated that there is no common benchmark for practice placements during study but there may be regional variation,

### **Fitness to practise**

There are **no** standards to monitor fitness to practise and suitability for social work in Austria.

### **Further information**

Austria did not reach an agreement of common understanding of social work profession or education with other European countries. They did not comment on IMI. The respondent did not know about the European Certificate of Current Professional Status.

## 7. BELGIUM (FRENCH SPEAKING COMMUNITY)

Response received from Attaché and Responsable of the Directive, providing information on one or more states/regions – the French community of Belgium, which includes the territory of the Walloon and Brussels-Capital regions.

### Social work activities

The following activities and tasks were selected to reflect those performed by social workers in Belgium (French community).

- Assess individuals', families', carers' risks, needs and circumstances;
- Plan, review and evaluate social work practices;
- Support individuals to represent their needs, views and circumstances;
- Manage risk to individuals, families and carers;
- Work in partnership with other professionals;
- Work collaboratively with other professionals and across different agencies;
- Case management;
- Community development;
- Counselling;
- Working with the criminal justice system;
- Research and project work; and
- Supervision and practice education.

The respondent elaborated:

*'The social worker is a professional of the social work, services and actions. He/she interacts in changing contexts and works at the intersection of social, cultural, political, legal, economic, psychological fields. The social worker is a professional, whose title is **protected** by the Law of 12 June 1945.'*<sup>12</sup>

According to the respondent, a social worker in Belgium is required to promote:

- Social justice;
- Social change;
- Citizenship;
- Problem solving within the frame of human relationships;
- Information, advocacy and promotion of human rights;
- Empowering and development of communities and individuals; and
- Improvement of individuals' and communities' welfare.

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<sup>12</sup> Further clarity is required about the regulatory status of the profession. A title protected by law would normally attract regulated professional status as set out in Article 3.1(a) of the Directive.

*'The social worker founds his/her actions on a system of values, guaranteeing the respect of the principles stated by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. As a professional of the collective action and the individual assistance, the social worker uses human relations and strategic analysis as [their] main tools for prevention actions, fighting against exclusion and discrimination as well as and individual and collective development projects. The social worker highlights the main problems and issues of our societies, by placing individuals at the centre of his/her work. He/she brings the societal issues to the social policy makers and advise[s] them in the future actions to be carried out by proposing innovative practices and actions.'*  
(Extracts from the framework of learning outcomes/competences for the bachelor's programme in social work)

### **Social work regulation**

According to Article 3.1(a), social work is **not** considered to be a **regulated** profession in Belgium (French community).

### **Social work education**

Education and training is regulated and is geared to the profession of social work.

The following qualification is geared to the practise of social work:

Name of qualification in national language:	<i>Bachelier - Assistant(e) Social(e)</i>
Name in English:	Bachelor - Social Worker
Academic level:	Higher education short-type programme
Length of study:	180 ECTs to be acquired in 3 years at least

There **are** systems in place to ensure standards of training of social workers:

*'The Agency for the quality evaluation of higher education is the independent quality assurance agency, which is in charge to organise the evaluation by national and international experts of the recognised higher education programmes. At the institutional level, the Higher Social Council of the Higher Council for the "Hautes Ecoles" developed a common learning outcomes and competences framework for the programme in social work. The framework has been implemented and specified by the 11 "Hautes Ecoles" organising the bachelor's programme in social work.'*

There is no recognised social work professional body in Belgium (French community), and there is no qualification accreditation body for social work in Belgium (French community).

### **Practice placements**

The minimum duration of internship required is 20 weeks. All practice placement days are required to take place during the course and are assessed by a supervisor, not necessarily a qualified social worker. There is no online system in place to check accreditation of awarding bodies.

**Fitness to practise**

There are no standards to monitor fitness to practise and suitability for social work in Belgium (French community).

**Further information**

Belgium (French community) did not reach an agreement of common understanding of social work profession or education with other European countries. Belgium (French community) does not intend to use IMI in the future and they do not use the European Certificate of Current Professional Status, nor do they intend to use the certificate in the future.

## 8. Bulgaria

Response received from the chief expert, National Centre for Information and Documentation, reporting on the whole country.

### Social work activities

The following activities and tasks were selected as reflecting those performed by social workers in Bulgaria.

- Assess individuals', families', carers' risks, needs and circumstances;
- Plan, review and evaluate social work practices;
- Manage risk to individuals, families and carers;
- Work collaboratively with other professionals and across different agencies;
- Manage care packages for children, families, adults and/or older people;
- Counselling; and
- Working with the criminal justice system.

No other activities were indicated in the free text box.

### Social work regulation

According to Article 3.1(a), social work is **not** considered to be a **regulated** profession in Bulgaria.

### Social work education

Education and training is **regulated** and is geared to the profession of social work.

The following qualification is geared to the practise of social work:

Name of qualification in national language:	<i>социален работник</i>
Name in English:	Social Worker
Academic level:	Bachelor's, Master's
Length of study:	4 to 5 years

There **are no** systems in place to ensure standards of training of social workers. There **is** a recognised social work professional body in Bulgaria: the Bulgarian Association of Social Workers.

There is **no** qualification accreditation body for social work in Bulgaria

### Practice placements

The minimum duration of internship/placement required is one month. All practice placement days are required to take place during the course and are assessed by a supervisor, not necessarily a qualified social worker. There is no online system in place to check accreditation of awarding bodies.

### Fitness to practise

There are no standards to monitor fitness to practise and suitability for social work in Bulgaria. To exchange information about Bulgarian nationals regarding disciplinary action or criminal sanctions in England that may have an impact on the pursuit of social work activities, contact the National Association of Social Workers.

**Further information**

Bulgaria did not reach an agreement of common understanding of social work profession or education with other European countries. Bulgaria intends to use IMI in the future; they do not use the European Certificate of Current Professional Status but intend to use the certificate in the future.

## 9. ESTONIA

Information received from the Estonian coordinator for the recognition of professional qualifications, in relation to the whole country.

### Social work activities

The following activities, selected from a pre-coded list of activities, were regarded to be performed by social workers in Estonia:

- Assess individuals', families', carers' risks, needs and circumstances;
- Support individuals to represent their needs, views and circumstances;
- Work collaboratively with other professionals and across different agencies; and
- Counselling.

The respondent indicated that social workers are not regulated in Estonia so, depending on requirements, they can have duties beyond the ones noted above.

### Social work regulation

In Estonia, social work is **not** a **regulated** profession.

There is a national recognised social work professional body in Estonia: '*Eesti Sotsiaaltöötajate Assotsiatsioon*'; [www.eswa.ee](http://www.eswa.ee). This is a voluntary association of social workers.

### Social work education

Education and training is **not regulated** in Estonia and is not geared to the profession of social work.

The following qualification gives the holder eligibility to be a social worker in Estonia:

Name in official language:	Sotsiaaltöötaja
Name in English:	Social worker
Academic level:	Bachelor's
Length of study:	3 years

There is a qualification accreditation body for social work in Estonia. The Estonian Qualifications Authority ([www.kutsekoda.ee](http://www.kutsekoda.ee)) coordinates the development of professional standards and the higher education study programmes are in accordance with these standards.

There is a system in place to ensure standards of training of social workers in Estonia. The Estonian Qualifications Agency runs the professional qualifications system, with professional standards for each profession, including social work. The higher education study programmes for social workers are kept in accordance with the relevant professional standards.

### Practice placements

No information was provided about practice placements.



**Fitness to practise**

There are no standards to monitor fitness to practise and suitability for social work in Estonia.

**Further information**

Estonia did not reach an agreement of common understanding of social work profession or education with other European countries. Estonia is intending to use Internal Marketing Information (IMI), and they use the European Certificate of Current Professional status. For further information it is best to contact the professional body '*Eesti Sotsiaaltöötajate Assotsiatsioon*' ([www.eswa.ee](http://www.eswa.ee)) for further information on the practise of the profession, and the Qualifications Authority for details of professional standards.

## 10. FINLAND

Information received from Senior Advisor, in relation to the whole country, excluding the Aland Island.

### Social work activities

The following activities, selected from a pre-coded list of activities, were regarded to be performed by social workers in Finland:

- Assess individuals', families', carers' risks, needs and circumstances;
- Plan, review and evaluate social work practices;
- Support individuals to represent their needs, views and circumstances
- Manage risk to individuals, families and carers;
- Work in partnership with other professionals;
- Take statutory responsibility of individuals they are working with including children and their families;
- Take statutory responsibility of individuals they are working with including people with learning disabilities and mental health problems;
- Work collaboratively with other professionals and across different agencies;
- Case management;
- Manage care packages for children, families, adults and/or older people;
- Community development;
- Counselling;
- Working with the criminal justice system;
- Research and project work; and
- Supervision and practice education.

No further social work activities were presented in the free text box.

### Social work regulation

Social work is a **regulated** profession in Finland. The law governing the regulation of social work profession is the No. 272/2005 Act on Qualification Requirements for Social Welfare Professionals, issued in Helsinki on 29 April 2005, which can be found at: <http://www.finlex.fi/fi/laki/kaannokset/2005/en20050272.pdf>.

There is one national regulatory body for social work, the Finnish National Board of Education, Hakaniemenranta 6 00530, Helsinki, Finland; email [recognition@oph.fi](mailto:recognition@oph.fi), website [www.oph.fi/recognition](http://www.oph.fi/recognition). The Finnish National Board of Education is responsible for making decisions about the professional recognition of qualifications that are completed abroad, for example in social services or in teaching.

The title of social worker is **protected** in Finland: '*sosiaalityöntekijä*' (Finnish) or '*socialarbetare*' (Swedish).

Social workers are **not required to register** with a regulatory body before they are able to practise in Finland, and there are no regional differences in this process. **No licence** to practice is required, and no minimum requirements for continuous professional development in place. There is no public-facing register (on a website) that

lists all registrant social workers in Finland. There is no recognised social work professional body in Finland.

### **Social work education**

Education and training is **regulated** in Finland and is geared to the profession of social work.

The following qualification gives the holder eligibility to be a social worker in Finland:

Name in official language:	Ylempi korkeakoulututkinto
Name in English:	Higher university degree
Academic level:	E
Length of study:	5 years (3 + 2)

Act No. 272/2005, on Qualification Requirements for Social Welfare Professionals, issued in Helsinki on 29 April 2005:

The following qualifications/studies confer eligibility to work as a social worker:

- 1) A person with a higher university degree (master's level) completed before 01.08.2005 that includes studies in social work, the extent of which are at least 55 credits (opintoviikko), including practical training and at least 15 credits worth of practical instruction, and a pro gradu (master's thesis) in the field of social work;
- 2) A person with a higher university degree completed before 01.08.2005 that includes at least subject studies or a cum laude approbatur grade on social policy or social development policy (yhteiskuntapolitiikka), and whose qualification includes studies in social work – or who has studied a sufficient amount of social work in addition to his/her degree requirements;
- 3) A person who has completed a social worker qualification (sosiaalihoitajan tutkinto) before 01.08.2005 or a comparable degree from the Svenska social-och kommunalhögskolan-unit in the University of Helsinki;
- 4) A person who has acquired a further qualification as a social worker in a university, as stipulated by the Ministry for Society and Welfare, by the end of the year 1992;
- 5) A person who has completed an applicable higher education degree before 1984 and has worked a minimum of 9 months as a social worker before the end of the year 1983 (an applicable degree includes studies in e.g. social work, social policy or such like);
- 6) A person qualified as a social worker under the old legislation (710/1982) 67.

There is no qualification accreditation body for social work in Finland and there is no online system to check accreditation of awarding bodies.

There is a system in place to ensure standards of training of social workers in Finland. Besides the regulations set down in the act, there are no further regulations for the university degree programmes' contents.

### **Practice placements**

There is a minimum 90 days of practice placements/internship, but the exact number of days may vary from university to university. All practice placement days are required to

take place during the course, and are assessed by a supervisor, not necessarily a qualified social worker. Supervision is done both at the site of the practice placement and at the university.

**Fitness to practise**

There are no standards to monitor fitness to practise and suitability for social work in Finland.

**Further information**

Finland did not reach an agreement of common understanding of social work profession or education with other European countries. Finland is intending to use Internal Marketing Information (IMI), but they do not use the European Certificate of Current Professional status, and do not intend to use the certificate in the future.

Contact the professional body '*Eesti Sotsiaaltöötajate Assotsiatsioon*' ([www.eswa.ee](http://www.eswa.ee)) for further information on the practise of the profession and the Qualifications Authority for details of professional standards.

## 11. ICELAND

Information received from Chief of Division of Clinical Quality and Public Health, Seltjarnarnes, in relation to the whole country.

### **Social work activities**

The following activities, selected from a pre-coded list of activities, were regarded to be performed by social workers in Iceland:

- Assess individuals', families', carers' risks, needs and circumstances;
- Plan, review and evaluate social work practices;
- Support individuals to represent their needs, views and circumstances;
- Manage risk to individuals, families and carers;
- Work in partnership with other professionals;
- Work collaboratively with other professionals and across different agencies;
- Case management;
- Manage care packages for children, families, adults and/or older people;
- Advocacy;
- Community development;
- Counselling;
- Working with the criminal justice system;
- Research and project work; and
- Supervision and practice education.

The respondent indicated that no laws or regulations stipulate the duties and activities of social workers.

### **Social work regulation**

Social work is a **regulated** profession in Iceland. It is regulated by the Social Work Act, No 95/1990 (with subsequent amendments); the Medical Director of Health Act, No 41/2007; and the Health Service Act, No 40/2007.

There is one national regulatory body for social work, the Directorate of Health, IS 170 Austurströnd 5, Iceland, email [annabara@landlaeknir.is](mailto:annabara@landlaeknir.is), website [www.landlaeknir.is](http://www.landlaeknir.is). This regulatory body is also responsible for regulating other professions including healthcare practitioners. The Medical Director of Health monitors the work of healthcare practitioners, and monitors their compliance with the provisions of health legislation and of other legislation, and government directives as appropriate.

As described in Article 3.1 (a) The title of 'social worker' is **protected** in Iceland. Social work is a regulated health-care profession in Iceland. In order to have the right to be called a Social Worker, according to the Social Work Act, No 95/1990 (with subsequent amendments), the holder of the title must have a licence to practise issued by the Directorate of Health. After completing a university degree in social work studies the graduate must apply to the Directorate of Health for a licence to practise in order to be permitted to work as a social worker.

Social workers are **required to register** with a regulatory body before they are able to practise in Iceland, and there are no regional differences in this process. A **licence** to

practice is required; registration is required only once and stays valid for life. There are minimum requirements for continuous professional development.

*'A social worker must know his/her duties as stated in laws and regulations, uphold his knowledge and learn and apply new knowledge in the professional field of social work. There is no public-facing register (on the website) that lists all registrants.'*

There is a recognised national social work professional body in Iceland, the 'Icelandic Association of Social Workers', [www.felagsradgjof.is](http://www.felagsradgjof.is), which is a professional association for social workers.

### **Social work education**

Education and training is **regulated** in Iceland and is geared to the profession of social work.

The following qualifications give the holder eligibility to be a social worker in Iceland:

Name in official language:	Félagsráðgjafi
Name in English:	Social worker
Academic level:	Master's
Length of study:	5 years

Name in official language:	Félagsráðgjafi með sérfræðileyfi
Name in English:	Social worker with expert license
Academic level:	University degree
Length of study:	2 years

Holders of social work qualifications obtained from the University of Iceland are automatically granted a licence. Applicants holding a comparable degree from other universities can be granted a licence to practise in Iceland with the professional title 'social worker'. Before such a licence is granted the (Icelandic) Association of Licensed Social Workers and the Department of Social Work Studies at the University of Iceland must give their opinion on the application. The Department of Social Work Studies at the University of Iceland can make it a condition for granting a licence that the applicant concerned can prove his/her knowledge of Icelandic statutes and regulations concerning the practice of social work in Iceland and his/her knowledge of the Icelandic language, both spoken and written. A licensed social worker has the right to use the title of specialist within a social work specialty if he/she has been granted a specialist licence by the Medical Director of Health. The requirements for being granted a specialist licence are set out in regulations issued by the Ministry of Welfare. Only those who meet the above qualifications can be employed to practise social work in Iceland.

There is **no** qualification accreditation body for social work in Iceland.

### **Practice placements**

No information was provided in relation to practice placement requirements.

## **Fitness to practise**

There are some standards in place to monitor fitness to practise and suitability for social work in Iceland. As for quality control, the Medical Director of Health Act states the following:

<http://eng.velferdarraduneyti.is/acts-of-Parliament/nr/20099>.

### *SECTION III Monitoring of healthcare practitioners*

#### *Art. 13 Monitoring of healthcare practitioners by the Medical Director of Health*

The Medical Director of Health monitors the work of healthcare practitioners, and monitors their compliance with the provisions of health legislation and of other legislation, and government directives as appropriate. The Medical Director of Health may require a healthcare practitioner to undergo specialist examination if he/she deems necessary, in order to ascertain whether he/she is fit to perform his/her work. Should a healthcare practitioner be suspected of being under the influence of alcohol or other substances at work, the Medical Director of Health may require him/her to undergo immediate tests to ascertain whether this is so.

#### *Art. 14 Reprimand*

Should the Medical Director of Health become aware that a healthcare practitioner neglects his/her professional duties, exceeds his/her professional boundaries, or violates the provisions of health legislation, the Medical Director shall give the healthcare practitioner a directive on rectification, or reprimand him/her, according to the circumstances. Should the healthcare practitioner not comply with the Medical Director's directive, provided without reprimand, the Medical Director shall reprimand him/her. The issue of a reprimand shall comply with the provisions of the Public Administration Act. The reprimand shall be in writing and cite grounds, and shall invariably be issued with respect to a specified event or events.

Reprimand usually issued without unnecessary delay. A decision of the Medical Director of Health to issue a reprimand may be appealed to the Minister. 1) Act 12/2008, art. 5.

#### *Art. 15 Revocation of licence*

Should a reprimand from the Medical Director of Health under art. 14 prove ineffective, he/she may decide that the licence of the person in question be revoked, permanently or temporarily.

The Medical Director of Health can revoke the licence of a healthcare practitioner without prior reprimand if the person in question is deemed incapable of performing his/her duties in an acceptable manner, for instance due to grave mental problems, mental or physical illness, use of drugs or other substances, abuse of alcohol or lack of professional competence. The same applies in the case of a healthcare practitioner grossly violating his/her professional duties, for instance by issuing wrong or misleading medical certificates, giving a physician's report without examination of the case, issuing wrong or misleading invoices, violating his/her duty of confidentiality, or by gross negligence in his/her work, or other conduct contrary to law. If the circumstances exist to justify revocation of a licence, the Medical Director of Health may restrict the person's licence temporarily. The nature of the restrictions shall be specified, and also their duration and the nature of monitoring. Procedures in decision-

making on revocation or restriction of licences are subject to the provisions of the Public Administration Act.

However, the respondent indicated that if there is strong evidence to suggest that the criteria for revocation of a licence are met, and a delay in revocation could entail risk to patients, the Medical Director of Health may revoke the licence of a healthcare practitioner with immediate effect, until a final decision under paras. 1 and 2 has been reached.

*'Should the Medical Director of Health not have made a final decision on revocation of the licence under para. 1 within three months, the provisional revocation is rescinded. The decision of the Medical Director of Health to revoke or restrict a licence may be appealed to the Minister. Should a healthcare practitioner base his/her right to practise in Iceland on a licence issued in another country, his/her right to practise in Iceland is revoked if his/her licence is revoked in that country. The right of a healthcare practitioner to practise is revoked if he/she is declared legally incompetent, or if he/she no longer meets the criteria which applied when the right to practise was granted.'*

*Act 12/2008, art. 6.*

#### *Art. 16 Surrender of licence*

A healthcare practitioner can surrender his/her licence by written notification to the Medical Director of Health. This does not preclude a reprimand under art. 14 where appropriate, nor formal revocation of licence under art. 15, in the case of professional misconduct which may entail revocation. Act 12/2008, art. 7.

#### *Art. 17 Re-granting of licence*

The Medical Director of Health can grant a licence anew to a healthcare practitioner whose licence has been revoked, or who has surrendered his/her licence, provided that the person in question has demonstrated that he/she meets the criteria of law for re-granting of the licence, and that the reasons which led to the revocation or surrender of the licence no longer apply. The Medical Director of Health can determine that the new licence shall be granted on a provisional or restricted basis, cp. art. 15. Act 12/2008, article 8.

### **Conduct, disciplinary and fitness to practise**

See previous question on Accreditation process and quality control.

England can exchange information about Iceland nationals regarding disciplinary action or criminal sanctions in England that may have an impact on the pursuit of social work activities by contacting the Directorate of Health.

### **Further information**

Iceland did not reach an agreement of common understanding of social work profession or education with other European countries. Iceland does not intend to use Internal Marketing Information (IMI), and they do not use the European Certificate of Current Professional status, nor intend to use the certificate in the future.



## 12. Irish Republic [Ireland]

Information received from National Qualifications Officer, Dublin, Irish Republic, in relation to the whole country.

### Social work activities

The following activities, selected from a pre-coded list of activities, were regarded as being performed by social workers in the Irish Republic:

- Assess individuals', families', carers' risks, needs and circumstances;
- Plan, review and evaluate social work practices;
- Support individuals to represent their needs, views and circumstances;
- Manage risk to individuals, families and carers;
- Work in partnership with other professionals;
- Take statutory responsibility of individuals they are working with including children and their families;
- Work collaboratively with other professionals and across different agencies;
- Case management;
- Advocacy;
- Community development;
- Counselling;
- Working with the criminal justice system;
- Research and project work; and
- Supervision and practice education.

### Social work regulation

Social work is a **regulated** profession in the Irish Republic. It is regulated by statute SI 97 of 1997. The National Social Work Qualifications Board is the recognition body for social work. In summer 2011 registration was introduced for social workers by the Social Workers Registration Board as per the Health and Social Care Professionals Act 2005.

Currently there is one national regulatory body for social work for the Republic of Ireland: the National Social Work Qualifications Board (NSWQB), email [nswqb@nswqb.ie](mailto:nswqb@nswqb.ie), website [www.nswqb.ie](http://www.nswqb.ie). However, the Social Workers Registration Board (SWRB), email [info@coru.ie](mailto:info@coru.ie), will take over the functions of the NSWQB and will establish registration for social workers. This regulatory body is only responsible for regulating social work.

As described in Article 3.1 (a), the title of social worker is **not protected** in the Irish Republic.

Social workers will be **required to register** with the SWRB before they are able to practise in the Irish Republic, and there are no regional differences in this process. A **licence** to practice will be required. Registration will be renewable, however the exact details will be set out when the register is opened, scheduled for summer 2011.

Currently there are no minimum requirements for continuous professional development in Irish Republic, with no regional differences. There is no public-facing

register on the website that lists all registrants. Criminal records or police checks will be part of the requirement for applications to register.

There is a recognised national social work professional body in Irish Republic, the Irish Association of Social Workers (IASW), [www.iasw.ie](http://www.iasw.ie). This is a professional body that deals with professional matters.

### **Social work education**

Education and training is **regulated** in the Irish Republic and is geared to the profession of social work.

The following qualification gives the holder eligibility to be a social worker in the Irish Republic:

Name in official language:	National Qualification in Social Work (NQSW)
Name in English:	National Qualification in Social Work (NQSW)
Academic level:	Level 9
Length of study:	Depends on route, minimum four years, usually 5 years.

Social Work is about to move to a system of registration as set out earlier. The NQSW can be earned by a four-year/honours bachelor's route or by a 2-year master's route, entry to which requires a bachelor's qualification in social science and relevant experience of social work. Each of these routes requires recognition by the NSWQB.

There is a qualification accreditation body for social work in the Irish Republic: the National Social Work Qualifications Board (NSWQB), email [nswqb@nswqb.ie](mailto:nswqb@nswqb.ie), website [www.nswqb.ie](http://www.nswqb.ie). This function will move to the new Social Workers Registration Board. There is an online system to check accreditation of awarding bodies, [www.nswqb.ie](http://www.nswqb.ie): note that this will move to [www.coru.ie](http://www.coru.ie).

### **Practice placements**

A minimum requirement of 1000 hours of practice placements is required. All practice placement days are required to take place during the course and are assessed by qualified social workers.

### **Fitness to practise**

There are **no** standards in place to monitor fitness to practise and suitability for social work in the Irish Republic. England can exchange information about Irish nationals regarding disciplinary action or criminal sanctions in England that may have an impact on the pursuit of social work activities through CORU.

### **Further information**

The Irish Republic did not reach an agreement of common understanding of social work profession or education with other European countries. The Irish Republic does not intend to use Internal Marketing Information (IMI), and they do not use the European

Certificate of Current Professional status, nor intend to use the certificate in the future.  
For further information contact [info@coru.ie](mailto:info@coru.ie).

### 13. LATVIA

Information received from Head of Recognition Division, Academic Information Centre, in relation to the whole country.

#### **Social work activities**

The following activities, selected from a pre-coded list of activities, were regarded to be performed by social workers in Latvia:

- Assess individuals', families', carers' risks, needs and circumstances;
- Plan, review and evaluate social work practices;
- Support individuals to represent their needs, views and circumstances;
- Manage risk to individuals, families and carers;
- Work in partnership with other professionals;
- Take statutory responsibility of individuals they are working with including children and their families;
- Take statutory responsibility of individuals they are working with including people with learning disabilities and mental health problems;
- Work collaboratively with other professionals and across different agencies;
- Case management; and
- Counselling.

According to the Law on Social Services and Social Assistance, the professional activity of a social worker and a charitable social worker are regarded to be aimed towards achieving and promoting practical resolution of the social problems of an individual and improvement in his or her quality of life, integration in the society, and the ability to help him or herself.

The respondent indicated that in Latvia social workers, and charitable social workers, are expected to:

- Provide a person with assistance and support in resolving social problems;
- Help the person develop the ability to resolve personal, interpersonal and social problems;
- Support the possibilities for the development of the person, as well as the right to take decisions independently and to implement them;
- Attract social and economic resources and the appropriate social services for the resolution of the social problems of a person or a group of persons; and
- Provide information regarding social service providers and establish contacts between the recipients and providers of social services.

#### **Social work regulation**

Social work is **not** a **regulated** profession in Latvia. There is no recognised social work professional body in Latvia.

#### **Social work education**

Education and training is **not regulated** in Latvia.

The following qualifications give the holder eligibility to be a social worker in Latvia:

Name in official language:	Sociālais darbinieks vai karitatīvais sociālais darbinieks
Name in English:	Social worker or charitable social worker
Academic level:	Postgraduate
Length of study:	2 years

Name in official language:	Profesionālais bakalaurs sociālajā darbā un sociālais darbinieks
Name in English:	Professional Bachelors in social work and social worker
Academic level:	Bachelor
Length of study:	4 years

Name in official language:	Sociālais aprūpētājs
Name in English:	Social carer
Academic level:	Short cycle higher professional education
Length of study:	2 years

Name in official language:	Sociālais rehabilitētājs
Name in English:	Social rehabilitator
Academic level:	Short cycle higher professional education
Length study:	2 years

Not all qualifications in the social work field are listed here. These set levels of acceptable qualifications have been in place only since 2008. The respondent indicated that there are many exceptions to these standard routes.

There is no system in place to ensure standards of training of social workers in Latvia. However, there is a qualification accreditation body for social work. All higher education programmes are accredited by the Ministry of Education and Science. The accreditation process is organized by Augstākās izglītības kvalitātes novērtēšanas centrs (higher education quality evaluation centre). All accredited programmes are available at [www.aiknc.lv](http://www.aiknc.lv). Only after graduating from an accredited study programme can a person get a state-recognized higher education diploma in Latvia. There is an online system to check accreditation of awarding bodies, [www.aiknc.lv](http://www.aiknc.lv).

### **Practice placements**

The requirements for number of days of practice depend on the study programme undertaken. All practice placement days are required to take place during the course. Assessment of practice placements depends on the study programme. There are legal requirements for those who supervise students in practical training; however, the respondent did not provide further information on these requirements.

**Fitness to practise**

There are **no** standards in place to monitor fitness to practise and suitability for social work in Latvia. Social workers are monitored by their employers. England can exchange information about Latvian nationals, regarding disciplinary action or criminal sanctions in England that may have an impact on the pursuit of social work activities, through the IMI system.

**Further information**

Latvia did not reach an agreement of common understanding on the social work profession or education with other European countries. Latvia intends to use Internal Marketing Information (IMI), but they do not use the European Certificate of Current Professional status. Currently it is not clear if Latvia will use the certificate in the future.

## 14. MALTA

Information received from the Chairperson of the social work professional board, in relation to the whole country.

### Social work activities

The following activities, selected from a pre-coded list of activities, were regarded to be performed by social workers in Malta:

- Assess individuals', families', carers' risks, needs and circumstances;
- Plan, review and evaluate social work practices;
- Support individuals to represent their needs, views and circumstances;
- Manage risk to individuals, families and carers;
- Work in partnership with other professionals;
- Work collaboratively with other professionals and across different agencies;
- Case management;
- Manage care packages for children, families, adults and/or older people;
- Advocacy;
- Counselling;
- Working with the criminal justice system; and
- Supervision and practice education.

### Social work regulation

According to Article 3.1(a) social work is a **regulated** profession in Malta, governed by a social work profession Act (Act xvii of 2003). There is one national regulatory body for social work, the Department for Social Welfare Standards, St Joseph High Road, Sta venera. This body is only responsible for regulating social work.

As described in Article 3.1 (a) of the Directive, the title social worker is **protected** in Malta: the name in the official language is '*haddiem socjali*', social worker.

Social workers are not required to register with a regulatory body before they are able to practise.

There is a recognised national social work professional body in Malta, the Malta Association of Social Workers, <http://sites.google.com/site/maswmalta/>. The aim of the association is to promote and enhance the quality and effectiveness of social work practice in Malta.

### Social work education

Education and training is **regulated** in Malta and is geared to the profession of social work.

The following qualifications give the holder eligibility to be a social worker in Malta:

Name in English:	Diploma in Applied Social Studies
Academic level:	First degree
Length of study:	3 years

Name in English:	Bachelor's Degree in Social Work
Academic level:	First degree
Length of study:	4 years

Name in English:	Master's in Social Work
Academic level:	Post graduate
Length of study:	2 years

The diploma course is not provided any more although there are practicing, warranted social workers with a diploma.

There is no qualification accreditation body for social work in Malta; however, there is an online system to check accreditation of awarding bodies: the Malta Qualifications Council, <http://www.mqc.gov.mt>.

### **Practice placements**

There are two practical placements during the course: the first of around 300 hrs and the second of around 400 hrs. Some practice placement days can be completed after the completion of the course. These are assessed by qualified social workers. The placements are supervised by practising social workers; assessments are conducted jointly with university tutors.

### **Fitness to practise**

There are **no** standards in place to monitor fitness to practise and suitability for social work in Malta. England can exchange information about Maltese nationals regarding disciplinary action or criminal sanctions in England that may have an impact on the pursuit of social work activities through communication with the Malta social work profession board, which is the legal board to deal with such information.

### **Further information**

Malta did not reach an agreement of common understanding of social work profession or education with other European countries. Malta intends to use Internal Marketing Information (IMI), but they do not use the European Certificate of Current Professional status. Malta intends to use the certificate in the future.



## 15. LUXEMBOURG

Very partial information was received via the online survey from the Ministry of Health, in relation to the whole country.

Luxembourg subsequently sent through a supplementary document that may augment the information below.

### **Social work activities**

The following activities, selected from a pre-coded list of activities, were regarded to be performed by social workers in Luxembourg:

- Assess individuals', families', carers' risks, needs and circumstances;
- Plan, review and evaluate social work practices;
- Support individuals to represent their needs, views and circumstances;
- Manage risk to individuals, families and carers;
- Work in partnership with other professionals;
- Take statutory responsibility of individuals they are working with including children and their families;
- Take statutory responsibility of individuals they are working with including people with learning disabilities and mental health problems;
- Work collaboratively with other professionals and across different agencies;
- Manage care packages for children, families, adults and/or older people;
- Counselling;
- Working with the criminal justice system;
- Research and project work; and
- Supervision and practice education.

### **Social work regulation**

According to Article 3.1(a) of the Directive, 2005/36/EC, social work is a **regulated** profession in Luxembourg.

In addition to the survey, the following information was subsequently received:

*'Usually if you mention « social work » in our country, you mean the work and tasks done by the social workers called in French "Assistants sociaux". There might be also another category of graduate working somehow in the same area: the graduate educators ("éducateurs gradués") although their tasks are somehow different (they foster more on educative problems: work with handicapped children, but also with endangered groups like unemployed people, homeless population or drug-addicted people.'*

When considering the "assistant social", the following details are considered important:

*'The regulation (grand-ducal regulation of 29.8.1979) claims future candidates to that profession to have studied for 4 years at least in higher education. This means: a study of at least 3 years followed by a one-year period of practical work (stage) after the academic period.'*

*Then candidates prepare for the Luxembourg “Diplôme d’Etat d’assistant social (State diploma as social worker). Then their career might start. They are paid on a basis of a higher career in health professions category.*

*Up to 2007 no social work qualifications and training were offered in Luxembourg. People were compelled to study abroad (usually in Belgium and France where there is a similar organization of the career and where the basic legislation system is similar to ours. Nowadays, candidates may study in other countries too. However they must seek recognition afterwards in Luxembourg (Commission mixte: Ministry of Higher Education and Ministry of Health).*

*This commission analyses the kind of studies achieved and the contents which must fit into our system. Eventually people must sit additional examinations in Luxembourg.*

*There is no more a strict obligation to do this “practical year” in order to get the above mentioned “State diploma”. The latter however is usually claimed for if you want to work for public administrations (actually offering the more numerous jobs in this area).’*

The Ministry of Health can provide further details about internal regulations such as disciplinary or other practical points.

Additional information about the career of social worker and graduate educator can be obtained directly from the respondent. However this information will be in French and would require further translation. For further questions, please contact: telephone: +352/ 2478 5521; fax: +352/26200142; [ministere-sante-etat.lu](http://ministere-sante-etat.lu).

## 16. LIECHTENSTEIN

Information received from the Chief of the Pedagogical Division in the Office of Education of Liechtenstein, in relation to the whole country.

### Social work activities

The following activities, selected from a pre-coded list of activities, were regarded to be performed by social workers in Liechtenstein:

- Assess individuals', families', carers' risks, needs and circumstances;
- Support individuals to represent their needs, views and circumstances;
- Manage risk to individuals, families and carers;
- Work in partnership with other professionals;
- Take statutory responsibility of individuals they are working with including children and their families;
- Work collaboratively with other professionals and across different agencies;
- Case management; and
- Manage care packages for children, families, adults and/or older people.

### Social work regulation

According to Article 3.1(a) of the Directive, 2005/36/EC, social work is **not a regulated** profession in Liechtenstein. However, there is more than one regulatory body<sup>13</sup> for social work. These bodies are only responsible for regulating social work. According to Article 3.1(a) the title social worker is not protected in Liechtenstein.

Social workers are required to **register** with a regulatory body before they are able to practise, no regional variations in the process of registration. A **licence**/certificate to practice is required. Registration is required only once and stays valid for life. There are no minimum requirements for continuous professional development. There is no public facing register on the web that lists all registrants. Criminal record or police checks are not required as part of the registration process.

### Social work education

The following qualification gives the holder eligibility to be a social worker in Liechtenstein:

Name in official language:	Diplomierter Sozialpädagoge oder Dipl. Sozialarbeiter
Name in English:	Social worker
Academic level:	Bachelor
Length of study:	3 post secondary years

There is **no** system in place to ensure standards of training of social workers in Liechtenstein. There is **no** qualification accreditation body for social work. And there is no system in place to check accreditation of awarding bodies online.

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<sup>13</sup> Further clarification is needed on whether this refers to a 'professional' rather than a 'regulatory' body.

**Practice placements**

The requirements for days of practice are unknown due to the fact that the educational institutions training social workers are abroad, mostly in Switzerland. Similarly, depending on the institutions, practice placements can be required to take place during, before or after academic learning. In most cases these placements are assessed by qualified social workers.

**Fitness to practise**

There are **no** standards in place to monitor fitness to practise and suitability for social work in Liechtenstein.

**Further information**

Liechtenstein did not reach an agreement of common understanding of the social work profession or education with other European countries. Liechtenstein intends to use Internal Marketing Information (IMI), but they do not use the European Certificate of Current Professional status. The question of whether Liechtenstein will use the certificate in the future has not yet been discussed.

## 17. SLOVENIA

Information received from Undersecretary, Ministry of Labour, in relation to the whole country.

### Social work activities

The following activities, selected from a pre-coded list of activities, were regarded as being performed by social workers in Slovenia:

- Assess individuals', families', carers' risks, needs and circumstances;
- Plan, review and evaluate social work practices;
- Support individuals to represent their needs, views and circumstances;
- Manage risk to individuals, families and carers;
- Work in partnership with other professionals;
- Take statutory responsibility of individuals they are working with including children and their families;
- Take statutory responsibility of individuals they are working with including people with learning disabilities and mental health problems;
- Work collaboratively with other professionals and across different agencies;
- Case management;
- Manage care packages for children, families, adults and/or older people;
- Community development;
- Counselling; and
- Working with the criminal justice system.

### Social work regulation

According to Article 3.1(a) social work is a **regulated** profession in Slovenia, governed by the Social Security Act 'Zakon o socialnem varstvu'. There is one national regulatory body for social work, the Ministry of Labour, Family and Social Affairs, Kotnikova 5, email [gp.mddsz@gov.si](mailto:gp.mddsz@gov.si), website <http://www.mddsz.gov.si/>. This body is only responsible for regulating social work.

As described in Article 3.1 (a) of the Directive, the title social worker is **protected** in Slovenia. The name in the official language is '*socialni delavec*'.

Social workers are not required to **register** with a regulatory body before they are able to practise. Registration is through the Faculty of Social Work, <http://www.fsd.uni-lj.si/>, and there are no regional differences in this process. A licence/certificate to practice is not required. Registration is required only once and remains valid for life.

There are minimum requirements for continuous professional development in Slovenia. Social workers have the right and obligation to receive ongoing education and training at their workplace and through the Social Chamber of Slovenia, which organizes and implements training for social workers. However, these requirements do not form part of a renewal process, and there are no regional differences in these. There is no public facing register that lists all registrants. In relation to criminal records/police checks, the respondent indicated that one of the requirements for employment in the public service is proof of no criminal record.

*'It should be pointed out that social workers must graduate from the School of Social Work (university studies), whereby they acquire the title of Bachelor of Arts in Social Work. Graduation from University is followed by a social welfare internship, culminating in a professional certification examination in social welfare. Under the Social Welfare Act, in addition to social workers, social welfare services are also provided by other professionals who have acquired two-year post-secondary or higher education degrees in psychology, teaching and special teaching disciplines, administration, law, medicine - specifically, occupational therapy - theology with specialized courses, and sociology, and have one year of professional experience in social work and have completed their internship and passed a professional certification examination in social welfare before the Social Chamber of Slovenia.'*

There are recognised national social work professional bodies in Slovenia:

1. *Socialna zbornica Slovenije*, <http://www.soczb-si.si/>, the Social Chamber of Slovenia. Provides training and education programs for professionals and technical staff, lays down the internship and professional certification examination requirements, organizes and conducts professional examinations in social welfare, plans and organizes supervision, and organizes and implements instructional counseling.
2. *Inštitut Republike Slovenije za socialno varstvo*, <http://www.irssv.si/>, the Institute of Social Welfare of the Republic of Slovenia, carries out IT, analytical, technical, documentation-related and program activities in the area of social welfare and carries out basic and R&D work.

In addition to these two professional institutions, there are other providers of social welfare in the Republic of Slovenia: the Community of Social Institutes of Slovenia (<http://www.ssz-slo.si/slo/main.asp>) and the Community of Centers for Social Work (<http://www.gov.si/csd/>).

### **Social work education**

Education and training is **regulated** in Slovenia and is geared to the profession of social work. There is a qualification accreditation body, the Social Chamber of Slovenia (see above for details). There is no online system to check accreditation of awarding body.

### **Practice placements**

Internships in the Republic of Slovenia are no longer mandatory, but employers (including the entire state administration) still require professionals to complete an internship, which lasts one year and may be shortened to nine months. Social workers also have a practicum during their studies at the 'School of Social Work'. Social work students must meet certain requirements (120 hours of practicum in an academic year) during their studies.

*'They choose locations for their practicum, where they have a mentor, and upon completion of the practicum they must write a report on it, and their mentor must also write a report on the practicum, which is then evaluated by their teachers at the 'School of Social Work'.'*

**Fitness to practise**

There are **some** standards in place to monitor fitness to practise and suitability for social work in Slovenia. The Social Chamber organizes instructional counseling and supervision, while the Social Inspectorate supervises the work of professionals via regular and special inspections.

England can exchange information about Slovenian nationals regarding disciplinary action or criminal sanctions in England that may have an impact on the pursuit of social work activities through the Social Inspection. (The work of social workers in the Republic of Slovenia is supervised by the Social Inspection ([http://www.id.gov.si/si/o\\_inspektoratu/organizacija\\_inspektorata\\_rs\\_za\\_delo/socialna\\_inspekcija/](http://www.id.gov.si/si/o_inspektoratu/organizacija_inspektorata_rs_za_delo/socialna_inspekcija/)), which is organized as part of the Ministry of Labor, Family and Social Affairs.)

**Further information**

Slovenia did not reach an agreement of common understanding of social work profession or education with other European countries. Slovenia intends to use Internal Marketing Information (IMI). Slovenia currently uses the European Certificate of Current Professional status and intends to continue using the certificate in the future.

## 18. SWEDEN

Information received from contact point for 2005/36/EC, Swedish National Agency for Higher Education, in relation to the whole country.

### Social work activities

The following activities, selected from a pre-coded list of activities, were regarded to be performed by social workers in Sweden:

- Assess individuals', families', carers' risks, needs and circumstances;
- Plan, review and evaluate social work practices;
- Support individuals to represent their needs, views and circumstances;
- Manage risk to individuals, families and carers;
- Work in partnership with other professionals;
- Take statutory responsibility of individuals they are working with including children and their families;
- Take statutory responsibility of individuals they are working with including people with learning disabilities and mental health problems;
- Work collaboratively with other professionals and across different agencies;
- Case management;
- Manage care packages for children, families, adults and/or older people;
- Advocacy;
- Community development;
- Counselling;
- Working with the criminal justice system;
- Research and project work; and
- Supervision and practice education.

Since the profession of social worker is not a regulated profession in Sweden, it is difficult to delimit the tasks and roles that would be considered as a social worker's duty. However, there are two regulated education and training programmes at university level in Sweden: "*Socionomexamen*", Bachelor of Science in Social Work, and "*Social omsorgsexamen*", University Diploma/Bachelor's/Master's in Social Care. The respondents also indicated that part of social workers' duties in Sweden is not only to manage, but also to conduct treatment.

### Social work regulation

According to Article 3.1(a) social work is **not a regulated** profession in Sweden.

There are recognised social work professional bodies in Sweden.

1. Socialstyrelsen (The National Board of Health and Welfare), is a national professional body, <http://www.socialstyrelsen.se/english>. Its scope is mainly quality control.
2. Akademikerförbundet SSR, <http://www.akademssr.se/in-english>, national coverage. This is a union of university graduates in social work.

### Social work education

Education and training is **regulated** in Sweden and is geared to the profession of social work.



The following qualifications give the holder eligibility to be a social worker in Sweden:

Name in official language:	Socionomexamen
Name in English:	Bachelor of Science in Social Work
Academic level:	D
Length of study:	3.5 years

Name in official language:	Social omsorgsexamen
Name in English:	University Diploma in Social Care
Academic level:	C
Length of study:	2.5 years

The "Social omsorgsexamen" (University Diploma in Social Care), a professional qualification, has not been given in Sweden since July 2007. Instead, it has been integrated into the "Socionomexamen" (Bachelor of Science in Social Work).

There is a qualification accreditation body for social work in Sweden, and there are systems in place to ensure standards of training of social work. The Swedish National Agency for Higher Education (Högskoleverket), a national body, is responsible for reviewing the quality of higher education in Sweden, i.e. evaluating subject areas and study programmes, and granting the right to award degrees (such as Bachelor of Science in Social Work according to the Degree Ordinance). The Agency also has the responsibility to ensure that the higher education institutions comply with relevant legislation and regulations (such as the Degree Ordinance). For more information, please see <http://www.hsv.se/aboutus/tasks.4.28afa2dc11bdc557480002016.html>. There is no online system to check accreditation of awarding bodies.

### **Practice placements**

There is no requirement for practice set in the Degree Ordinance either for "Socionomexamen" and "Social omsorgsexamen". However, according to the Degree Ordinance specific requirements determined by each higher education institution itself within the parameters of the requirements laid down in this qualification descriptor shall also apply for a Bachelor of Science in Social Work. In reality this means that all higher education institutions require more than one semester of practice (i.e. half a year of full time) in order to obtain the degree of Bachelor of Science in Social Work. All practice placement days are required to take place during the course, and are assessed by qualified social workers. The tutor responsible for practice placement at the higher education institution will conduct the assessment together with the qualified social workers at the work place.

### **Fitness to practise**

There are standards in place to monitor fitness to practise and suitability for social work in Sweden. The National Board of Health and Welfare has the task to supervise that standards are observed: website <http://www.socialstyrelsen.se/english/aboutus>.

England can exchange information about Sweden nationals regarding disciplinary action or criminal sanctions in England that may have an impact on the pursuit of social work activities through reporting malpractice or dissatisfaction in social services:  
<http://www.socialstyrelsen.se/reportingmalpractice>.

**Further information**

Sweden did not reach an agreement of common understanding of social work profession or education with other European countries. Sweden intends to use Internal Marketing Information (IMI), but does not use the European Certificate of Current Professional status. Sweden does not intend to use the certificate in the future.

## 19. SWITZERLAND

Information received from the Swiss coordinator for the recognition of professional qualifications, in relation to the whole country.

### Social work activities

The following activities, selected from a pre-coded list of activities, were regarded to be performed by social workers in Switzerland:

- Assess individuals', families', carers' risks, needs and circumstances;
- Plan, review and evaluate social work practices;
- Support individuals to represent their needs, views and circumstances;
- Manage risk to individuals, families and carers;
- Work in partnership with other professionals;
- Take statutory responsibility of individuals they are working with including children and their families;
- Take statutory responsibility of individuals they are working with including people with learning disabilities and mental health problems;
- Work collaboratively with other professionals and across different agencies;
- Manage care packages for children, families, adults and/or older people;
- Community development;
- Working with the criminal justice system;
- Research and project work; and
- Supervision and practice education.

### Social work regulation

According to Article 3.1(a) social work is **a regulated** profession in Switzerland. The situation differs according to the professional activity. Pre-school social education (professionals working with children from age 0 to 12) is regulated by the cantonal authorities:

*'to educate young persons in special institutions for criminal teenagers is a federal-regulated profession. Some other social activities (like socio-cultural activist) are indirectly regulated through the salary regulation (only the persons with a defined professional education can get a salary as a qualified person).'*

There is one national regulatory body for social work in Switzerland, OPET, [www.bbt.admin.ch/diploma](http://www.bbt.admin.ch/diploma). This body is only responsible for regulating social work.

As described in Article 3.1 (a) of the Directive, the title social worker is **not protected** in Switzerland. The following groups of professional activities are regulated: social assistant; social educator, socio-cultural animator and educator for young children (from age 0 to 12). Social workers are not required to register with a regulatory body and there is no recognised social work professional body in Switzerland.

### Social work education

Education and training is **regulated** in Switzerland and is geared to the profession of social work.

The following qualifications give the holder eligibility to be a social worker in Switzerland:

Name in official language:	Professional colleges education
Academic level:	D
Length of study:	3 years

Name in official language:	Universities of applied sciences (UAS)
Academic level:	D
Length of study:	3 years (Bachelor's)

These are just the denomination of the education's type. For both types Switzerland offer an education as a social educator.

*'Socio-cultural animator and social assistant is only taught in UAS, and educator for young children only in professional colleges. UAS' and professional colleges' diplomas give access to the same professional activities.'*

There is **no** qualification accreditation body for social work in Switzerland, but there are **systems** in place to ensure standards of training of social work. Within the UAS, the schools are responsible to define the education. In professional colleges the Federal State is the competent authority to regulate the education. There is an online system to check accreditation of awarding bodies. The address of recognised professional colleges and of UAS can be found on the website from the Federal Office for Professional Education (OPET). However, the website does not list ancient (older) educational institutions (or qualifications).

### **Practice placements**

All practice placement days are required to take place during the course: these are assessed by qualified social workers.

### **Fitness to practise**

There are **no standards** in place to monitor fitness to practise and suitability for social work in Sweden. Fitness to practise is not regulated in Switzerland. There is no clear communication channel for exchanging information about Swiss nationals regarding disciplinary action or criminal sanctions in England that may have an impact on the pursuit of social work activities.

### **Further information**

Switzerland intends to use Internal Marketing Information (IMI), but does not use the European Certificate of Current Professional status. Switzerland may use the certificate in the future: however, the respondent was not familiar with the details of this certificate.

## 20. THE NETHERLANDS

Information received from Nuffic/National Contact Point Directive 2005/36/EC, in relation to the whole country.

### Social work activities

The following activities, selected from a pre-coded list of activities, were regarded as being performed by social workers in The Netherlands:

- Assess individuals', families', carers' risks, needs and circumstances;
- Support individuals to represent their needs, views and circumstances;
- Manage risk to individuals, families and carers;
- Work in partnership with other professionals;
- Take statutory responsibility of individuals they are working with including children and their families;
- Take statutory responsibility of individuals they are working with including people with learning disabilities and mental health problems;
- Case management;
- Manage care packages for children, families, adults and/or older people;
- Counselling; and
- Working with the criminal justice system.

### Social work regulation

According to Article 3.1(a) social work is **not a regulated** profession in The Netherlands. However, social workers register with the *Beroepsregister van Agogen en Maatschappelijk Werkers*, Professional Register of Welfare Workers and Social Workers. The register includes 2000 registered social workers and welfare workers. These are divided into two groups (or chambers): chamber of social work and the welfare workers' chamber. There are two categories of registration: provisional (based on diploma) and executive (diploma and work experience). Another register, *Nederlandse Vereniging van Maatschappelijk Werkers (NVMW)*, Dutch Association of Social Workers, has 4000 members. It promotes the best social work services through quality assurance, facilitates transfer of knowledge among members, and offers individual services to members. This may be compared to the British Association of Social Workers.

Prior to registration and renewal of registration there is a process of assessment of education and work experience. Renewal of registration occurs every 5 years. Members should comply with the code of ethics for social work practice, its professional profile and the quality standards as set out by the Register. This compares to the General Social Care Council in the UK, but is not a competent authority.

There are recognised national social work professional bodies in the Netherlands: *Nederlandse Vereniging van Maatschappelijk Werkers* (NVMW) Dutch Association of Social Workers, <http://www.nvmw.nl/>; and *Beroepsregister van Agogen en Maatschappelijk Werkers*, <http://www.bamw.nl/>.

### Social work education

Social work education and training is **not regulated** in the Netherlands.

The following qualifications give the holder eligibility to be a social worker in the Netherlands:

Name in official language:	Maatschappelijk werk en dienstverlening
Name in English:	Social work and welfare
Academic level:	D (Bachelors in applied sciences)
Length of study:	4 years of full-time higher professional education

Name in official language:	Sociaal werk
Name in English:	Social work
Academic level:	E (university Masters)
Length of study:	1.5 years, postgraduate university education

Name in official language:	Sociaal werk
Name in English:	Social work
Academic level:	E (Masters in applied sciences)
Length of study:	1 year, postgraduate education, conducted at university of applied sciences

There are also 3-year education programmes in social work conducted at the level of secondary vocational education. These programmes give limited professional rights: usually, graduates work under supervision.

There are **systems** in place to ensure standards of training of social work in the Netherlands. There is a qualification accreditation body for social work, the Netherlands Flemish accreditation organization: [www.nvao.net](http://www.nvao.net). There is an online system in place to check accreditation of awarding bodies, also at [www.nvao.net](http://www.nvao.net).

### Practice placements

Practice placements usually involve the whole of the third year of the four year Bachelor's degree. All practice placement days are required to take place during the course and are assessed by qualified social workers.

### Fitness to practise

There are **standards** in place to monitor fitness to practise and suitability for social work in the Netherlands. Fitness to practise is not regulated in the Netherlands. Further information can be obtained from the professional social work bodies mentioned above.

Information about Dutch nationals regarding disciplinary action or criminal sanctions in England that may have an impact on the pursuit of social work activities may be exchanged through the national professional bodies indicated above.

### Further information

The Netherlands did not reach an agreement of common understanding of social work profession or education with other European countries. The Netherlands does not intend to use Internal Marketing Information (IMI) and does not use the European

Certificate of Current Professional status. The Netherlands does not intend to use the certificate in the future.

## 21. SPAIN

Information was received through the online survey from Co-ordinador Area ONG, *Ministerio de Sanidad, política Social e Igualdad*, the Spanish Ministry for Health, Social Policies and Equality in relation to the whole country. The information is partial at this stage: we do not see this as a complete picture of social work regulation and qualifications in Spain.

### Social work activities

The following activities, selected from a pre-coded list of activities, are regarded as being performed by social workers in Spain:

- Counselling.<sup>14</sup>

### Social work regulation

According to Article 3.1(a) of the Directive, 2005/36/EC, social work is **not a regulated** profession in Spain. However, the qualification '*Diplomado en Trabajo Social*' is regulated.<sup>15</sup>

### Further information

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Based on documentary analysis, the following information on 'social work education' is extracted:

The profession of '*Diplomado en Trabajo Social*' is a regulated profession in the sense of regulated profession which appears in the Directive 2005/36/EC. The official Spanish name of the profession is not "Social worker (Trabajador social)" but "*Diplomado en Trabajo Social*", which is a degree certifying successful completion of training at a three-year University (article 11.d of Directive 2005/36/EC).

Anyone who holds the '*Diplomado en Trabajo Social*' can practise this profession in Spain. In any case, it's also necessary to consider [that] before 1981 we didn't have these professionals in Spain but other professionals called '*Asistentes Sociales*'. The '*Asistentes Sociales*' can also work as '*Diplomado en Trabajo Social*'. However, it is recommended that qualifications obtained prior to 1981 are considered on an individual basis.

Those holding the Spanish diploma '*Diplomado en Educación Social*' are not able to practice the regulated profession of '*Diplomado en Trabajo Social*' (Social worker) in Spain.

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Source: documentary analysis - Spanish documents

No information was received in relation to practice placements, fitness to practise or the use of IMI and information exchange.

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<sup>14</sup>Further clarity is required in relation to the activities of social work.

<sup>15</sup> Further clarity is required about the regulatory status of the profession.



## 22. NORWAY

Partial information was received in response to the survey, from INVIA, in relation to the whole country.

### **Social work activities**

The following activities, selected from a pre-coded list of activities, were regarded to be performed by social workers in Norway:

- Work collaboratively with other professionals and across different agencies;
- Counselling;
- Research and project work; and
- Supervision and practice education.

### **Social work regulation**

According to Article 3.1(a) of the Directive, 2005/36/EC, social work is **not** a **regulated** profession in Norway.

No information was received in relation to social work training and qualifications including practice placement requirements, fitness to practise and the use of IMI.

## **23. GREECE**

Greece did not respond to our survey; however, they provided us with the following information through email communications. Information was received from the Director of the Hellenic Republic Ministry of Education.

The regulatory framework is set within the Presidential Decree 23/92 'exercise of the profession of social care worker'. A licence for the profession is granted by a decision issued by the Minister of Health and Social Solidarity or by decision of the competent body designated by article 29 of law 1558/85.

Within this legislative framework, social workers can provide their services within organized services of the public and private sector. By order of the Minister of Health and Social Solidarity, social workers can act as freelancers as long as they have demonstrably practiced the profession for at least five years.

In addition, the Presidential Decree 50/86 'definition of professional rights of graduates of the Social Work Department of the Health and Care Professions Faculty' describes the activities these graduates can engage in.

Article 54 of law 3918/2011 provides for access to the profession of social work to be given by the degree awarded by the Social Work Department of the Health and Care Professions Faculty of the Technological Institutes, or by the degree awarded by the Social Administration Department of the University of Thrace.

No information is provided in relation to practice placements, fitness to practise, or specific qualifications that entitle the holder eligibility to register as social workers.

Information exchange can be conducted through the IMI System.

## 24. CZECH REPUBLIC

Information from contact at the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports, via email, about the whole country. The respondent did not complete the online survey but provided the following information in addition to the 'Social Services Act, No. 108/2006' translated into English.

Eligibility to be employed as a 'social worker' or 'worker in social services' is governed in the Czech Republic by the Social Services Act no 108/2006 Coll, <http://www.mpsv.cz/en/1613>. For further enquiries contact the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs of the Czech Republic.

According to the Social Services Act, social services include:

- social counselling;
- social care services; and
- social prevention services.

*Basic activities provided within social services include:*

- assistance with the handling common self-care acts;
- assistance with personal hygiene or arranging for personal hygiene conditions;
- provision of food or assistance with arranging for food;
- provision of accommodation or overnight stay;
- assistance with running a household;
- pedagogical, educational and activation activities;
- social counselling;
- mediating contacts with the social environment;
- social therapeutic activities;
- assistance with asserting rights, justified interests and looking after personal matters;
- telephone assistance in crisis;
- training skills for handling self-care, training self-sufficiency and other activities leading to social integration; and
- support for creating and improving basic work habits and skills.

*'A social worker shall carry out social investigation, arranges for social agenda including solutions of social law problems in facilities providing social care services, social law counselling, analytic, methodical and conceptual activities in the social sector, professional activities in facilities providing social preventive services, screening activities, provision of crisis assistance, social Counselling; and social rehabilitation.'*

Vocational skills required to perform the profession of social worker are:

- a) higher vocational education acquired upon completion of an educational programme accredited according to a special legal regulation (40),
- b) university-level education acquired as part of Bachelor's or Master's degree study programmes focused on social work, social policy, social pedagogy,

- social care or special pedagogy, and accredited according to a special legal regulation (41),
- c) completion of accredited educational courses in branches stipulated in letters (a) and (b), totally amounting to at least 200 hours, and practice in performing the profession of a social worker for at least five years in the case of completion of university-level education in a branch not stipulated under letter (b),
  - d) in the case of a marriage and family counsellor, university-level education acquired upon proper completion of studies of single-branch psychology or a Master's programme at a university specializing in humanities, completed concurrently with postgraduate training in marriage counselling methods and psychotherapy to the extent of at least 400 hours, or a similar long-term psychotherapeutic training accredited in the health care sector.

#### Continuous Education of a Social Worker:

- (1) A social worker shall be involved in continuous education focused on refreshing, strengthening and enhancing his qualification.
- (2) Continuous education shall be provided on the basis of accreditation of educational facilities and educational programmes granted by the Ministry, and it shall be carried out at universities, higher vocational schools and educational facilities of legal entities and physical persons (hereafter 'educational facility').
- (3) Forms of continuous education include
  - a) Specialized education arranged for by universities and higher vocational schools, following up vocational skills acquired for practising the profession of a social worker;
  - b) Participation in accredited courses;
  - c) Vocational traineeship (internship) in social services facilities; and
  - d) Participation in training.
- (4) Participation in continuous education according to subsection (3) shall be considered as enhancing qualification according to a special regulation 43.
- (5) A certificate issued by an educational facility organizing continuous education shall constitute a document confirming completion of continuous education according to subsection (3).

## CONCLUSION

This report provides detailed information on social work regulation, registration process, education and training (including practice placements), fitness to practise and other valuable information for a considerable number of EEA countries. The high level of EEA countries' engagement with the research process highlights a mutual understanding of the value of information sharing in relation to the social work profession across Europe. This is expected to grow with the increasingly free movement across Europe and the shortages of social workers in some countries including England.

The overall analysis indicates the variation of social work activities and regulatory systems across Europe. Of particular interest is the fact that taking statutory responsibility for individuals, whether children, families or older people, was not regarded to be part of social workers duties and activities in a considerable number of European countries. However, responses to the free text boxes indicate an awareness of the growing interest in the social work profession and the effect of the Bologna agreement is evident in this process.

There is the opportunity through the EC Internal Market Information System (IMI) for competent authorities to carry out mutual exchange on qualifications and regulatory fitness to practise issues. This option has recently opened up for social work. Some respondents have indicated that they see this as a way of sustaining communication to support cross-border mobility in the future.

Only six of the countries confirmed that fitness to practise standards are in place, either through direct regulation or a related code of professional ethics. There was recognition in the absence of a standard that sharing information on disciplinary actions or criminal sanctions can be difficult across countries, including issues around data protection. Others seem to indicate that while they do not have a standard for fitness to practise, they would expect to share information. The lack of fitness to practise standards for social work in many countries in the EEA poses challenges for the exchange of information. The Directive gives the right for each competent authority to provide information on legal establishment, good conduct and the absence of any disciplinary or criminal sanction of a professional nature. Unless there are strong systems in place in each country, cross-country communication may continue to be difficult for those accessing the permanent register and for temporary social workers where a competent authority may not have access to information on suitability and fitness to practise while endorsing qualification credentials.

We saw some variability in the extent and integration of practice learning, assessed alongside course curriculum or thereafter for the award of the qualification. This is a key requirement for social work in England and further discussions need to take place between competent authorities to learn more about the standard and quality of practice learning.

The output from this research has strengthened the knowledge base on social work qualifications in Europe and will enable the GSCC and in the future the Health

Professions Council which takes over the GSCC's regulation of social workers in 2012 to more accurately assess the qualifications received from outside the UK. It will also enable those employers who recruit social workers in the EEA to have a prior knowledge of the qualifications likely to be eligible for registration. The GSCC will build on the information gained to enable consistent, fair and transparent decision making about qualifications that meet the requirements for social work in England.

### **Possible future work in this area**

We note the interpretation difficulties in different layers of regulation, definitions, terminologies and the potential for lost meaning in translated texts. We consider that different modes of interaction are likely to be of benefit in the future, including structured face-to-face exchanges and thematic seminars as well as use of the EC database (IMI).

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## GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Terms used in the research	Glossary of definition
Directive 2005/36 EC	<a href="#"><u>Directive 2005/36/EC</u></a> (the Directive) sets out all provisions for the mutual recognition of qualifications gained within the EEA with the aim of abolishing obstacles to free movement of services and labour, and a drive to a uniform, transparent and flexible regime for the recognition of qualifications. The intention is to make it easier for qualified professionals to practise their profession in European countries other than their own with a minimum of bureaucracy, but with due safeguards to public health and safety and customer protection.
The European Communities (Recognition of Professional Qualifications) Regulations 2007	<a href="#"><u>The European Communities (Recognition of Professional Qualifications) Regulations 2007 (the Regulations)</u></a> (Statutory Instrument 2007 No. 2781) transposed the Directive 2005/36/EC into English law through regulations implemented from October 2007. The Regulations (Part 3 Chapter 1 Regulations 20-27) set out what is expected of competent authorities in England. Schedule 1 of the regulations lists 'Social Worker' in England as regulated and the GSCC as the named competent authority. Schedule 2 names social work as a regulated profession having public health or safety implications. Part 2 of the Regulations, sets out the provisions for EEA nationals or those with enforceable community rights to provide temporary services in England.
Competent authority	<a href="#"><u>Article 3 of Directive 2005/36/EC</u></a> definition of a competent authority is: "any authority or body empowered by a Member State specifically to issue or receive training diplomas and other documents or information and to receive applications and take decisions referred to in this Directive". The GSCC is a competent authority and is a contact point for the profession of social work in England.
GSCC	The General Social Care Council is the regulator for social work in England. Following new legislation, the GSCC function will transfer from April 2012 to a new body who will take over the registration and conduct functions. The GSCC will then be abolished.
UK National Contact Point (UK NCP)	The UK NCP is the National Contact Point for Professional Qualifications in the United Kingdom. They are part of a wider network of Contact Points in the European Union (EU), European Economic Area (EEA) and Switzerland. The function of UK NCP is to aid the mobility of professionals



	<p>throughout Europe.</p> <p>UK NCP provides essential information for qualified professionals to aid mobility throughout the EU. UK NCP will be able to guide someone through the process of obtaining recognition of their professional qualifications. They can do this by providing the contact details of the appropriate Competent Authority in the UK and in the rest of Europe, as well as clarifying the regulations surrounding their profession in the UK.</p>
EEA	European Economic Area (EEA) and Switzerland
EEA state	<p>EEA State means—</p> <p>(a) a member State (26 countries), other than the United Kingdom;</p> <p>(b) Norway, Iceland or Liechtenstein; or</p> <p>(c) Switzerland.</p>
EU Member State	A country that is in the European Union (EU)/European Economic Area (EEA) or Switzerland
Regulated profession	<p>Regulated social work is when entry to the profession of social work is subject to specific qualifications by law, regulation or administrative provision, which authorises the holder of the qualification to take up or pursue the activities concerned. It may include a protected professional title, licence to practice or other standard required for the practise of the profession.</p> <p><b>A regulated profession</b> is defined in Article 3.1(a) of the Directive as:</p> <p>“a professional activity or group of professional activities, access to which, the pursuit of which, or one of the modes of pursuit of which is subject, directly or indirectly, by virtue of legislative, regulatory or administrative provisions to the possession of specific professional qualifications; in particular, the use of a professional title limited by legislative, regulatory or administrative provisions to holders of a given professional qualification shall constitute a mode of pursuit”.</p>
Regulated education and training	<p>Regulated education and training is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• any education and training which is directly geared to the practice of social work; and</li> <li>• where appropriate the social work training or practice required in addition to the course is determined by the laws of the Member State; or</li> <li>• monitored or approved by the relevant authority.</li> </ul>

	<p>Regulated education and training is defined in Article 3.1(e) of the Directive as:</p> <p>“any training which is specifically geared to the pursuit of a given profession and which comprises a course or courses complemented, where appropriate, by professional training, or probationary or professional practice. The structure and level of the professional training, probationary or professional practice shall be determined by the laws, regulations or administrative provisions of the Member State concerned or monitored or approved by the authority designated for that purpose.”</p> <p>This concept applies in those situations where the profession is not regulated or the professional title of ‘social worker’ is not needed to practise the profession in the member state, but there is regulation of education and training in that member state. Both count as evidence of regulation for the purposes of the Directive.</p>
Unregulated profession	<p>An unregulated profession is where access to the social work profession is not regulated by legislation in the member state or the title of ‘social worker’ is not needed to practise the profession. To be eligible for assessment under the Directive in circumstances where the profession is unregulated in the EEA state, the applicant must be able to provide documentary evidence that they:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• hold a relevant qualification (together with any further necessary training which has prepared the applicant for the profession); and</li> <li>• have practised the profession in the country of training for a minimum of two years during the last ten years; or</li> <li>• their education and training is regulated and is geared to the profession of social work (Article 13(2)).</li> </ul>
IMI	<p>The Internal Market Information is an EC data base that enables competent authorities to ask questions and exchange information on qualifications and fitness to practise issues. Social Work Regulators may now join following the earlier pilot of the system with health professionals.</p>
European Certificate of Current Professional Status	<p>Following agreement between healthcare regulators, it is a certificate that enables the exchange of information between regulators. It includes information about current regulatory status and fitness to practise. It is valid for three months after its issue by the regulator.</p>

## **APPENDIX I: SUMMARY OF INFORMATION ON ENGLAND (SENT TO COUNTRIES)**

### **Introduction**

The General Social Care Council (GSCC) is the competent authority for social work in England. The GSCC contributes to the safety and protection of people in receipt of social work services in England through fulfilling its statutory regulatory functions of registration, conduct, standard setting and social work education.

This briefing provides an overview on social work regulation in England and the qualifications that give the holder eligibility to practice and use the protected title of 'social worker'. It is not exhaustive of all the arrangements and provisions within our regulatory remit for social work.

### **Activities classed as social work in England**

The following activities are included in professional social work in England:

- Assessment of individuals', families', and family carers' risks, needs and circumstances;
- Making plans, reviewing and evaluating social work interventions;
- Supporting individuals to represent their needs, views and circumstances to promote their wellbeing;
- Managing safeguarding interventions protecting individuals, families and carers who may be at risk of harm;
- Partnership working with other professionals and across services;
- Taking legal statutory actions in accordance with procedures and agency remit including children and young people fostering and adoption;
- Taking legal statutory actions in accordance with procedures and agency remit including people with learning disabilities and mental health problems;
- Day-to-day case management, to support positive care outcomes;
- Developing and managing care packages for children, families and adults and/or older people in consultation with them to meet their needs;
- Advocacy and representation duties for vulnerable adults and children;
- Community development;
- Counselling, and other direct intervention methods;
- Working with the criminal justice system;
- Research and project work; and
- Supervision and practice education.

Please note the above is an indicative list of the kinds of professional activities and is not exhaustive.

### **Registration with the GSCC - Protection of title (Social Worker)**

As described in Article 3.1(a) of Directive 2005/36 EC (the Directive), social work is a regulated profession in the United Kingdom (UK). All social workers in England must register with the GSCC and maintain their registration to be able to practise and call themselves a social worker.

Since 1 April 2005, the title 'social worker' is protected by law.<sup>16</sup> This means that individuals who are not registered by the GSCC should not describe themselves as a social worker; should not imply registration with the GSCC; or hold themselves out as registered, with the intent to deceive. Roles that may not have social work in the title that involve a substantial amount of social work, such as team manager, service manager, senior practitioner, practice manager are also included within the protection of title. The protection of title is to ensure public protection and social workers must not practise or call themselves a social worker without being registered with us.

### **Renewal**

Once registered, social workers are required to renew their registration with the GSCC every three years.

### **Continuous professional development**

To maintain their registration at renewal the social worker must have undertaken a minimum standard of post-registration training and learning of 90 hours (15 days).

### **Conduct - fitness to practice**

The GSCC has published a code of practice for social workers<sup>17</sup> and has powers under the Care Standards Act 2000 to investigate where there is evidence of a breach of the code of practice. An applicant may be refused entry onto the register because of prior conduct in or outside the UK that may place people who use services at risk.

Following registration, people may refer a matter to us because a registered social worker or social work student has breached the code of practice, for example:

- has taken advantage of their role or abused a person who uses services;
- their work has fallen well below the standard that is expected with a serious or repeated competence issue; or
- has behaved in a way (in or outside work) that their suitability to work in social work is called into question.

Concerns will be investigated in line with the GSCC's conduct process. A social worker that is found to be guilty of misconduct can be removed from the register, suspended for a period of up to two years, or have an admonishment (caution, public record) placed against their entry in the register for a period of up to five years.<sup>18</sup>

### **On-line register of social workers and student social workers**

A 'register of social workers' listing all social workers that are currently registered with the GSCC can be found at: [www.gsc.org.uk](http://www.gsc.org.uk). This includes information about suspensions from the register, conditions and admonishment (caution, public record).

### **Regulation of other social care professions**

Social work is the only regulated profession in social care in England. All other social care professions are unregulated. This is not the case in the other UK countries, for

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<sup>16</sup> Section 61 of the Care Standards Act 2000 for England and Wales.

<sup>17</sup> The code of practice for social work sets out the professional and ethical standards aimed to protect the public: <http://www.gsc.org.uk/page/35/Codes+of+practice.html>.

<sup>18</sup> GSCC conduct regulations: <http://www.gsc.org.uk/page/42/The+conduct+process.html>.

more information please visit their respective websites. Details can be found at the end of this document.

### **Social work qualifications in England**

The GSCC regulates social work education in England covering qualifying and post qualifying education and training.<sup>19</sup>

From 2003 the qualification for entry to the social work profession in England is the Social Work Bachelor (Honours) Degree of 3 years study at graduate level or 2 years at post graduate level. For the purpose of recognising social work qualifications gained within the EEA the GSCC places the Social Work Degree at level D.

Social work qualifications are delivered through 83 Higher Education Institutes or Universities accredited by the GSCC as meeting the standard to offer social work qualifications. Currently there are 278 approved courses (including post qualifying education) in England. The GSCC operates a voluntary register for students participating on an approved qualifying course.

The degree in social work is a professional social work qualification in all settings (residential, field, day, domiciliary, healthcare and education) and sectors (employers in the statutory, voluntary and private sectors). It is sometimes referred to as a generic qualification covering all the key knowledge, skills and values required of a professional working across service areas. Social Workers are then expected to continue education and training for specialist social work practice in delivery agencies for Children and Young People and Adult Services as well as learning for practice education and leadership and management.

### **Qualifications that give the holder eligibility to register and practise as a social worker in England**

The most commonly held approved qualifications are shown in the table below but there are others as well that are listed in [Schedule 1](#) of the GSCC's Registration Rules 2008. Qualification's awarded before 2005 have acquired rights under Article 12 of the Directive. For more information about any of these qualifications and to confirm the holder's eligibility to practise in England, email: [International@gsc.org.uk](mailto:International@gsc.org.uk).

<b>Qualification</b>	<b>Academic level - Article 11</b> <small>20</small>	<b>Awarding body</b>	<b>Information</b>
Social work Bachelor (Honours) degree	D	An awarding body accredited by the GSCC to	Awarded from 2006. [first

<sup>19</sup> The Care Standards Act 2000 gives the GSCC powers to make rules under which social work training courses are approved and to produce lists of approved courses. The **Approval of courses for the social work degree rules 2002** and the **Approval of post-qualifying courses rules 2005** set out the legal basis for our approval of courses.

<sup>20</sup> Article 11 of the EU Directive 2005/36/EC provides level descriptors for qualifications and asks each competent authority to assign the appropriate level to their country qualification.

(3 year graduate course)		run approved courses. T This is the link to a list of accredited Universities and their approved courses in England. <a href="#">Accredited Higher Education Institutes</a>	intake 2003]
Master's degree in social work (MSW) (2 year postgraduate course)	D	An awarding body accredited by the GSCC to run approved courses. This is the link to a list of accredited Universities and their approved courses in England. <a href="#">Accredited Higher Education Institutes</a>	Awarded from 2005. [first intake 2003]
Diploma in Social Work (DipSW) (2 year post graduate course)	C	Central Council for Education and Training in Social Work (CCETSW).	Last intake in 2003/awarded in parallel with the Degree to allow completion for 2 – 4 year programmes.
Certificate in Social Services (CSS) (2 year post graduate course)	C	Central Council for Education and Training in Social Work (CCETSW).	Last intake 1994/95
Certificate in Qualification in Social Work (CQSW) (2 year postgraduate course)	C	Central Council for Education and Training in Social Work (CCETSW)	Last intake 1994/95

### **Regulation of social work education**

The GSCC regulates social work through a range of activities informed by proportionate and risk based regulatory principles. This means that any university supplier of social work education must be accredited, and each learning program must be approved before it can offer a social work course to students. This covers qualifying and post qualifying education and training. Once a learning programme is approved, the GSCC has the powers to monitor progress against our standards including a quality assurance cycle with findings captured annually and a system of review every five years to ensure continuing fit for purpose education for social workers that is of a high standard.

### **Standards for the social work degree in England**

Social work qualifications are based on outcomes underpinned by three sets of standards<sup>21</sup>:

- 1) The National Occupational Standards for Social Work (2002) covering professional practice.
- 2) The Quality Assurance Agency Social Work Subject Benchmarks (2008) covering academic and integrated practice standards.
- 3) The Code of Practice for social care workers (2002) covering the values and ethics of social work practice.

Requirements for the Social Work degree are also set out by the government (Department of Health (DH) 2002) to underpin qualifications covering prior attainment acceptance criteria, the standards and how people who use services should be involved in delivery (selection, teaching, and assessment).

Each student must undergo 200 days supervised and assessed practice as a compulsory element of study that is assessed alongside academic achievement. There are also required modules of study on preparation for practice that enable students to learn about organisations and delivery contexts before going out on placements.

### **Standards for post qualifying social work education (PQ Education)**

The GSCC's framework for PQ education<sup>22</sup> starts at degree level and onwards to Master's and higher levels of attainment. It is regulated by the GSCC in a similar way through accreditation, approval and quality assurance processes as with the Degree in Social Work. The GSCC publish standards for five areas of practice:

- Children, Young People, their Families and Carers;
- Social Work with Adults;
- Social Work in Mental Health Services;
- Practice Education; and
- Leadership and Management.

Where a social worker is registered with the GSCC they may progress their learning and development in a new or specialist role by undertaking PQ training supported by their employer.

### **Social Work Reform Board**

There are major longer term reforms taking place in social work in England supported by government to raise the profile, status and competence of social workers including the development of new professional capabilities (standards) improving supervision and increasing capacity for direct social work practice.

### **Assessing the equivalence of Social Work qualifications held by incoming migrants to England**

From the above standards the GSCC has identified the key requirements for professional

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<sup>21</sup>Details of the standards are to be found on the GSCC website:  
<http://www.gsc.org.uk/page/130/Social+work+degree+documents.html>.

<sup>22</sup><http://www.gsc.org.uk/page/124/Post+qualifying+education.html>.

practice in England mindful of the differences and variations of social work qualifications worldwide. A key aspect is that there should be sufficient social work content in the curriculum and practice learning placements (supervised and assessed as part of the course) to enable social workers to transfer learning into a new context for delivery.<sup>23</sup>

The summary criteria set out the baseline considerations that inform decisions on accepting qualifications as eligible for registration. The GSCC is currently updating the same criteria to explain with greater clarity what is meant and to eliminate duplication. The assessments are generally undertaken on a case by case basis<sup>24</sup> added to by GSCC information on qualifications seen, along with other information gathered from the country of training and the outcome of previous assessments. Where the GSCC is satisfied through contact with a regulatory or accrediting body that a qualification meets our standards we show this on our website to help future applicants to be clear as to the qualifications most likely to be accepted.

The assessment process takes into account the regulated/unregulated status of the qualification and the provisions within the Directive for recognising qualifications. Information and guidance on registration and qualifications achieved outside the UK can be found on the GSCC website.<sup>25</sup>

### **Exchanging information across countries of Europe**

The GSCC is committed to continuous exchange of information between competent authorities both in the recognition of qualifications and information exchange aimed to protect the public.

We are currently exploring the benefits of joining the Internal Market Information EC database for exchange of information.

We are also exploring the introduction of the European Certificate of Current Professional Standing for outgoing migrants.

We look forward to your response to our survey into qualifications and regulation of social work in Europe to begin to embed mutual exchange to ensure standards and to protect the public.

More information can be found on the GSCC website [www.gsc.org.uk](http://www.gsc.org.uk) and by contacting:

UK contact points

### **GSCC Competent Authority:**

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<sup>23</sup> The summary assessment criteria is available on the GSCC website link:

<http://www.gsc.org.uk/page/197/Qualification+Assessment+Criteria.html>

The criteria is being updated to show more clearly what is required for social work practice in England – a new version will be available by end of March 2011 at the same link.

<sup>24</sup> Consistent with Directive 2005/36/EC General Systems Provisions applied to social work

<sup>25</sup> <http://www.gsc.org.uk/page/87/Social+workers+qualified+outside+the+UK.html>



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### Other social work competent authorities in the UK

Along with the GSCC there are three other competent authorities for social work in the UK. Each competent authority has its own regulatory rules and social work qualifications. More information can be found on their web sites or by direct contact at:

Northern Ireland	Northern Ireland Social Care Council (NISCC)	Web: <a href="http://www.niscc.info">www.niscc.info</a> Tel: +44 (0)2890 417600 Email: <a href="mailto:info@nisocialcarecouncil.org.uk">info@nisocialcarecouncil.org.uk</a>
Scotland	Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC)	Web: <a href="http://www.sssc.uk.com">www.sssc.uk.com</a> Tel: +44 (0)1382 207101 Email: <a href="mailto:enquiries@sssc.uk.com">enquiries@sssc.uk.com</a>
Wales	Care Council for Wales (CCW)	Web: <a href="http://www.ccwales.org.uk/">http://www.ccwales.org.uk/</a> Tel: +44 (0)29 2022 6257 Email: <a href="mailto:info@ccwales.org.uk">info@ccwales.org.uk</a>

**General Social Care Council**  
**7 February 2011**

## APPENDIX II: BRIEF OVERALL ANALYSIS OF ALL RESPONSES

Table 3

### European Social Work Profession and Qualifications

Are you providing information relating to the whole country or some regions only?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes- whole country	90.9%	20
No- one or more regions/states only	9.1%	2
<b>answered question</b>		<b>22</b>

Table 4

**Social work activities and roles may be different from country to country; The following tasks and activities can be considered to be part of social workers' duties; please select ALL tasks that are considered to be the duties of social workers in your country.**

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Assess individuals', families', carers' risks, needs and circumstances;	90.9%	20
Plan, review and evaluate social work practices;	77.3%	17
Support individuals to represent their needs, views and circumstances;	86.4%	19
Manage risk to individuals, families and carers;	86.4%	19
Work in partnership with other professionals;	81.8%	18
Take statutory responsibility of individuals they are working with including children and their families;	59.1%	13
Take statutory responsibility of individuals they are working with including people with learning disabilities and mental health problems;	50.0%	11
Work collaboratively with other professionals and across different agencies;	90.9%	20
Case management;	77.3%	17
Manage care packages for children, families, adults and/or older people;	68.2%	15
Advocacy	36.4%	8
Community development;	54.5%	12
Counselling;	86.4%	19
Working with the criminal justice system	77.3%	17
Research and project work	59.1%	13
Supervision and practice education	59.1%	13
Please use this text box to illustrate any additional tasks and roles that are considered part of social workers' duties in your country		9
<b>answered question</b>		<b>22</b>
<b>skipped question</b>		<b>0</b>

Table 5

**Is social work considered to be a regulated profession in your country, according to the above article?**

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	54.5%	12
No	45.5%	10
<b>answered question</b>		<b>22</b>
<b>skipped question</b>		<b>0</b>

Table 6

Is there ONE national regulatory body for social work in your country?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes, one national body	61.5%	8
No, more than one body	38.5%	5
<b><i>answered question</i></b>		<b>13</b>
<b><i>skipped question</i></b>		<b>9</b>

Figure 2

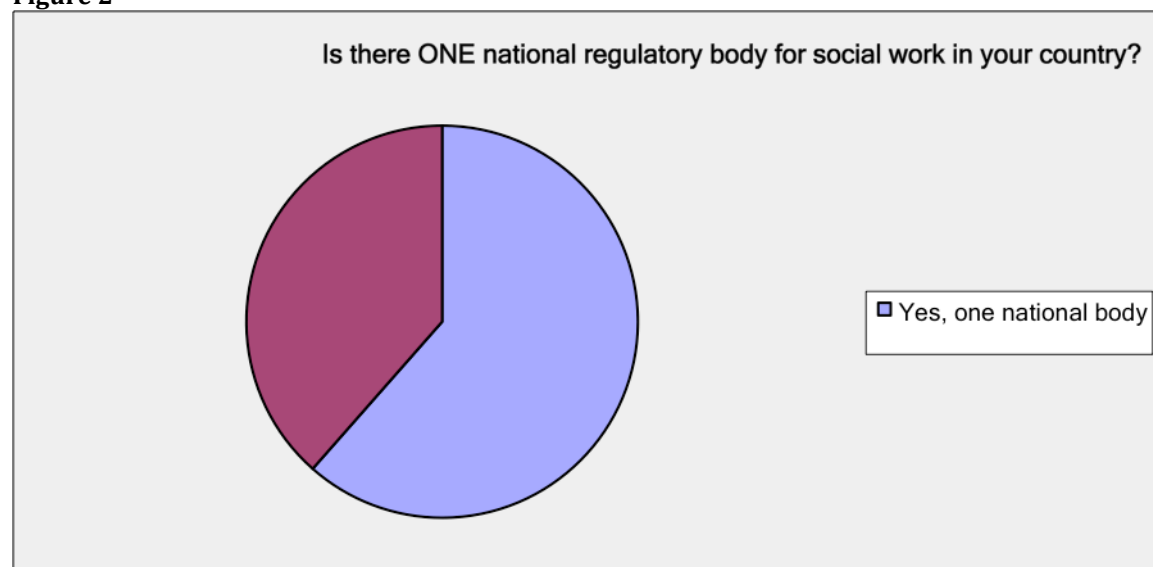


Table 7

Are any of the social work regulatory bodies responsible for regulating other professions?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
No, only responsible for regulating social work	66.7%	8
Yes; Please provide details and where possible website address	33.3%	4
<b><i>answered question</i></b>		<b>12</b>
<b><i>skipped question</i></b>		<b>10</b>

Table 8

As described in Article 3.1 (a) of the Directive, is the title social worker protected in your country?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	61.5%	8
No	38.5%	5
<b><i>answered question</i></b>		<b>13</b>
<b><i>skipped question</i></b>		<b>9</b>

Table 9

**Are social workers required to register with a regulatory body before they are able to practise?**

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	58.3%	7
No	41.7%	5
<b><i>answered question</i></b>		<b>12</b>
<b><i>skipped question</i></b>		<b>10</b>

Table 10

**Is a licence/certificate to practise required?**

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	62.5%	5
No	37.5%	3
<b><i>answered question</i></b>		<b>8</b>
<b><i>skipped question</i></b>		<b>14</b>

Table 11

**Is registration required only once or is it renewable?**

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Required only once and stays valid for life	85.7%	6
Renewable	14.3%	1
<b><i>answered question</i></b>		<b>7</b>
<b><i>skipped question</i></b>		<b>15</b>

Table 12

**Are there minimum requirements for continuous professional development?**

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
No	37.5%	3
Yes, tell us more about it	62.5%	5
<b><i>answered question</i></b>		<b>8</b>
<b><i>skipped question</i></b>		<b>14</b>

Table 13

**Is the education and training regulated and is it geared to the profession of social work?**

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	66.7%	10
No	33.3%	5
<b><i>answered question</i></b>		<b>15</b>
<b><i>skipped question</i></b>		<b>7</b>

Table 14

Can you tell us about any systems in place to ensure standards of training of social workers?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
No systems are in place	28.6%	4
Yes, explain	71.4%	10
<b><i>answered question</i></b>		<b>14</b>
<b><i>skipped question</i></b>		<b>8</b>

Table 15

Is there a recognised social work professional body (formal/informal/Non Governmental Organization or other) in your country:

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
No	35.0%	7
Yes	65.0%	13
<b><i>answered question</i></b>		<b>20</b>
<b><i>skipped question</i></b>		<b>2</b>

Figure 3

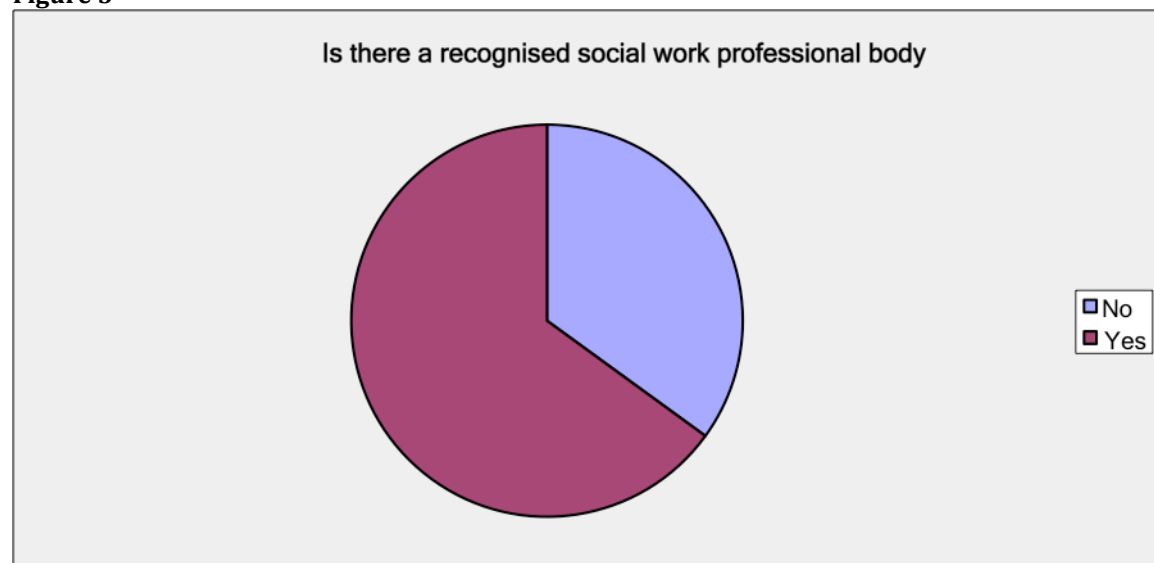


Table 16

Is there a qualification accreditation body for social work in your country?

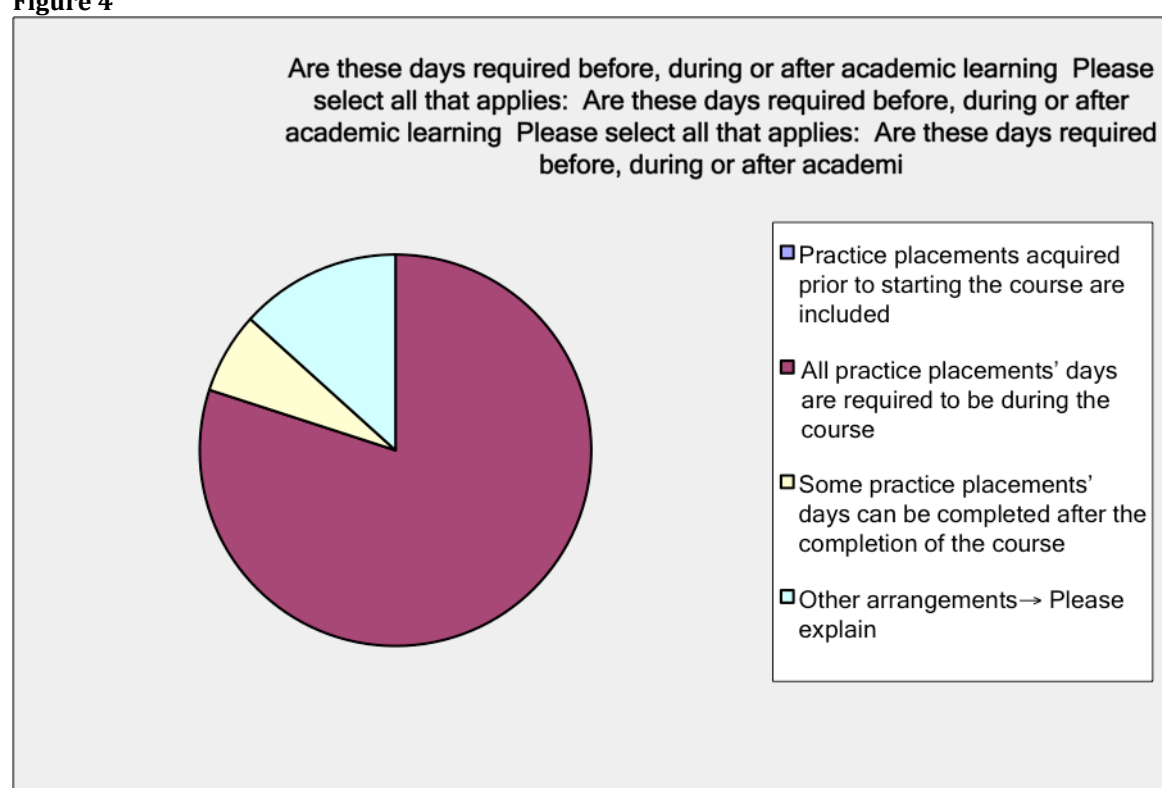
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
No	55.6%	10
Yes → provide details with regional contact names and details	44.4%	8
<b><i>answered question</i></b>		<b>18</b>
<b><i>skipped question</i></b>		<b>4</b>

**Table 17**

**Are these days required before, during or after academic learning Please select all that applies:**

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Practice placements acquired prior to starting the course are included	0.0%	0
All practice placement days are required to take place during the course	80.0%	12
Some practice placement days can be completed after the completion of the course	6.7%	1
Other arrangements→ Please explain	13.3%	2
<b>answered question</b>		<b>15</b>
<b>skipped question</b>		<b>7</b>

**Figure 4**



**Table 18**

**Who assess students' practice placements?**

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
No practice placements are required	0.0%	0
Assessed by qualified social workers	61.5%	8
Assessed by a supervisor, not necessarily a qualified social worker	38.5%	5
No formal assessment is required	0.0%	0
Please use this box to elaborate on the process of assessing students' practice placements - You can use your own language to answer in the provided text		10

box	
<b><i>answered question</i></b>	<b>13</b>
<b><i>skipped question</i></b>	<b>9</b>

**Table 19**

**Do you have an online system to check accreditation of awarding bodies?**

<b>Answer Options</b>	<b>Response Percent</b>	<b>Response Count</b>
No	64.3%	9
Yes, please provide details with website address	35.7%	5
<b><i>answered question</i></b>		<b>14</b>
<b><i>skipped question</i></b>		<b>8</b>

**Table 20**

**Do you have standards to monitor fitness to practise and suitability for social work in your country?**

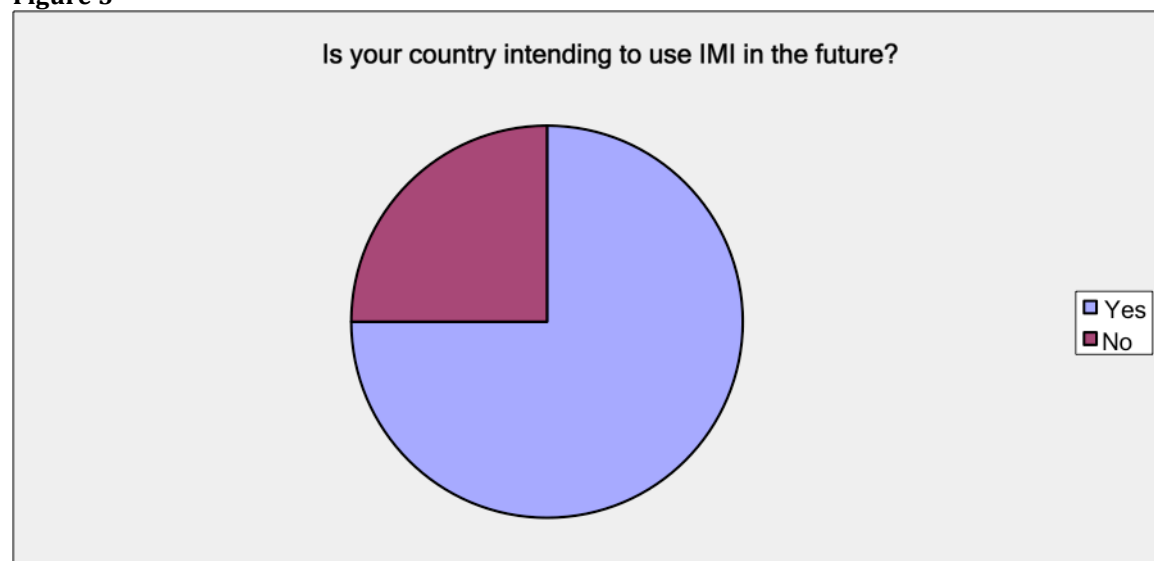
<b>Answer Options</b>	<b>Response Percent</b>	<b>Response Count</b>
No	66.7%	12
Yes - what are the systems in relation to monitoring fitness to practise and disciplinary actions?	33.3%	6
<b><i>answered question</i></b>		<b>18</b>
<b><i>skipped question</i></b>		<b>4</b>

**Table 21**

**The social work profession is identified as the next priority profession for Internal Marketing Information (IMI); Is your country intending to use IMI in the future?**

<b>Answer Options</b>	<b>Response Percent</b>	<b>Response Count</b>
Yes	75.0%	12
No	25.0%	4
<b><i>answered question</i></b>		<b>16</b>
<b><i>skipped question</i></b>		<b>6</b>

**Figure 5**



**Table 22**

**Do you use the European Certificate of Current Professional Status?**

<b>Answer Options</b>	<b>Response Percent</b>	<b>Response Count</b>
Yes	23.5%	4
No	76.5%	13
<i>answered question</i>		<b>17</b>
<i>skipped question</i>		<b>5</b>